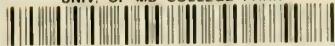



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*Maryland*

# HUMANITIES



Baltimore —  
Looking Back at 250 Years

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## To Our Readers

In 1797 a group of men — who were the only citizens allowed to vote at that time — met together in one of Baltimore's public pleasure gardens to debate whether to go to the state legislative body in Annapolis to request that their bustling community of tradesmen, merchants, bankers, and seamen become an incorporated city. The answer was a resounding yes.

The Maryland Humanities Council is proud to present this issue of our magazine to commemorate the two hundredth anniversary of the incorporation of Baltimore Towne into the City of Baltimore in 1797. Many changes have occurred in the city on the bay over the past two centuries, and the Council, which has its headquarters in Baltimore, was excited to fund a two-day conference at the University of Baltimore, where scholars and the general public reflected on those changes.

Jessica Elfenbein, Public History Programs Coordinator for the University of Baltimore, and Bettye Gardner, Professor of History at Coppin State University, organized the event, appropriately naming it *Making Diversity Work: 250 Years of Baltimore History*.

In this issue we have attempted to summarize only a few of the many papers presented. Donna Barnes enlivened my dull synopses with some wonderful photos from Baltimore's past. For further information on any of the papers presented at the conference, you may call either Jessica Elfenbein or Bettye Gardner at their offices. They will be happy to share copies of the full-length papers with you or put you in touch with the authors.

We hope you enjoy this issue of *Maryland Humanities*.

*Barbara Wells Sarudy*  
Executive Director



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## HUMANITIES

*Maryland Humanities* is a publication of the Maryland Humanities Council, an independent, nonprofit, tax-exempt organization. Council programs receive major support from the National Endowment for the Humanities, with additional funding from the Maryland Division of Historical and Cultural Programs, corporations, foundations, and individuals.

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## Volunteer Fire Companies And Community Formation In Baltimore, 1780–1858

Foreign visitors to our country in the nineteenth century were fond of commenting that Americans were enamored by “associations.” Alexis de Tocqueville reported that “in the United States, Associations are established to promote the public safety, commerce, industry, morality and religion. There is no end which the human will despairs of attaining through the combined power of individuals united in a society.”

In this “era of associations” the volunteer fire company was perhaps the most noble, free from obvious partisan or economic interest, and dedicated to the protection of all regardless of occupation, ethnicity or religion. As the November 20, 1851 *Baltimore Sun* commented on the occasion of the firemen’s anniversary parade, their own fire companies presented “a scene eminently and exclusively American.” The volunteer fire department “leads the world as an exponent of practical energy and genuine ability.”

Between 1763, when concerned citizens formed the Mechanical Fire Company, and 1859, when the city of Baltimore instituted a paid municipal fire department, all firefighting in Baltimore was performed by volunteers. As citizens generally began to strive for order in the city in the 1840s and 1850s, the culture of the boisterous firehouse increasingly came under attack. Baltimoreans were no longer willing to tolerate rowdy volunteer firefighters, and other institutions emerged to provide neighborhoods with the services previously offered by the fire companies. The emergence of a paid fire department in Baltimore in 1858 marked the end of volunteer firefighting in Baltimore, but it did not take away a history of good deeds, valiant efforts, and community building in young Baltimore city.

Amy S. Greenberg  
Penn State University



*Firemen of Baltimore in uniform, circa 1853. Courtesy of the Maryland Historical Society.*

## Walbrook: The Suburbanization of Northwest Baltimore 1850–1945

A northwest neighborhood of Baltimore City, Walbrook’s history manifests several distinct periods of suburbanization: a wealthy community of country estates, an upper middle-class suburban village, a middle-class streetcar rowhouse suburb, and finally a neighborhood fighting urban blight.

*For more than a century Baltimore was known throughout the nation under the unsavory name of "Mobtown." The title owed its origin to the speed and frequency with which the citizenry found excuse to riot.*

Francis F. Beirne

Originally Walbrook was the site of several grand country seats where late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Baltimore gentry retreated from the unhealthy city during the summer months. In Walbrook, the end of the summer estate tradition began with the construction of Highland Park. In 1870 the Chesapeake, Livingston and Franklin Building Association bought Highland Park, the home of the Pearson Family. Charles Wilson, president of the building association, began cutting up streets and building several cottages. Concurrently, the Baltimore, Calverton, and Powhatan horse car line opened. Four years later the Highland Park Hotel opened. The street grid pattern, the horse car line, and the hotel urbanized the area. In 1888 the community was annexed to the city, making it politically urban.

In 1912 three Mission Style three-story apartment buildings were built on Clifton Avenue. The erection of the apartment buildings offered a variety of housing for a broader economic class, as well as signified a demographic change taking place.

North Avenue became Walbrook's commercial center. During the 1920s Walbrook gained its own commercial center with bakeries, butchers, movie theaters, drug stores and many other shops affordable to the working middle class.

In 1940–1950 nearly 25 percent of the Walbrook area was African-American. By 1960 Walbrook was 75–100 percent African-American. Today, the urban poor living in rowhouses and detached housing sliced into apartment units have replaced the nineteenth-century gentry in Baltimore's Walbrook.

*Eric L. Holcomb*

*Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation*

## Secession in an Urban Context: The Class and Political Background of Baltimore's Southern Sympathizers

At the outbreak of the Civil War in Maryland on April 19, 1861, Union troops traveling to Washington fought armed Baltimore civilians. At least twenty-six died and more than one hundred were injured. Following a three-week standoff between an armed municipal government and federal troops, Union forces peacefully took control of the city on May 13 and remained until the war's end.

The men who rioted on April 19, 1861, and their supporters generally came from wealthy merchant families. Politically, they supported the Democratic party in opposition to the American, or Know Nothing, party which controlled Baltimore's municipal government from 1854 until 1860. A sizable number of riot leaders worked in the U.S. customs service.

In 1860 the nation elected Abraham Lincoln, a Republican. Following Lincoln's victory, Democratic patronage official Edward Spencer lamented that "it is all a scramble now for the spoils, and the American party are making desperate efforts to get control of the Baltimore Post Office and Custom House." The prospect of a Republican-appointed customs service worried local Democrats interested in patronage plums and merchants concerned about Southern trade.

Ties between Unionism, labor activism, and the American party persuaded some Baltimore industrialists to join the secession camp. In 1861 Baltimore conservatives thought the Confederacy would best protect the power they only recently had regained. Citizens of Baltimore remained divided in their loyalties throughout the Civil War.

*Frank Towers*  
*Clarion University*



## Brown Water, Black Men: Afro-Americans in the Potomac Flotilla, 1861–1865

Baltimore — with a diverse population of Unionists, Confederate sympathizers, free blacks, and slaves — provided soldiers and sailors as combatants for both the Union and Confederacy during the Civil War. In April 1861, the secretary of the navy, under the advice of Commander James H. Ward, organized the Potomac Flotilla to “interrupt the enemy’s communications; assuredly keep open our own; drive from those waters [the Chesapeake tributaries] every hostile bottom; threaten all the points of a shore line . . . ; protect loyal citizens; convey, tow, transport troops or intelligence with dispatch; be generally useful.”

The naval operations along the Chesapeake tributaries became greater than naval officials had initially envisioned. The thriving trade in contraband goods — such as foodstuffs, weapons, ammunition, medical supplies, and recruits — between southern sympathizers in Maryland and Confederates in Virginia was more than a match for the navy.

Fugitive slaves and free born black recruits from Maryland and Virginia played a major role in the Potomac Flotilla as laborers, in raiding parties, and as mariners. Within this complement of black seamen, approximately 30 percent had lived in Baltimore prior to, during, and after the war. Though black men had always served in the United States Navy, naval officials limited their numbers to five percent of the total naval manpower and denied them promotion into the noncommissioned and commissioned officer ranks. With the onset of a protracted war, the loss of seasoned sailors to the Confederacy, medical discharges, and the expiration of terms of service, the recruitment of Afro-Americans seemed more palatable.

*Roger A. Davidson Jr.*  
*Howard University*

## To Benefit the Human Family: Benevolence Toward African- Americans in Post–Civil War Baltimore

On November 1, 1864, Marylanders emancipated their slaves. Numbers of African Americans finally unfettered from the bonds of servitude trudged their way to Baltimore in search of a new life. The Quakers organized Baltimore Freedmen’s Association, which helped place the sick and indigent into private homes and sewed new garments for them. Other Baltimoreans assisted both the Freedmen and the city’s general African-American population, founding private, nondenominational benevolent organizations. Their ranks were derived mostly from upper middle class Union sympathizers, Quakers and Unitarians. This small but very significant cadre of idealistic Marylanders attempted to maximize the effects of emancipation in Baltimore by first organizing schools for the Freedmen and their children and later an orphanage, a home for the elderly, and reformatory houses for youths.

In the case of the Shelter for the Orphans of Colored Soldiers and Friendless Colored Children, African-American organizations and individuals provided significant financial backing, moral support, and material goods to keep the institution in operation. Church congregations, such as the Sharp Street, Orchard Street and Bethel Churches, gave Sunday offerings and held fundraising fairs to assist in these efforts.

*Robert W. Schoeberlein*  
*Maryland Historical Society*





*Perkins Spring Square circa 1890.  
Courtesy of the Maryland Historical Society*

*Baltimore . . .*

*I belong here where everything  
is civilized and gay and rotted  
and polite.*

F. Scott Fitzgerald

## Monuments of Urbanity: The Development of Baltimore's Residential Squares

Beginning with the layout of Mt. Vernon Place, and continuing through to the development of Collington Square in 1880, nearly twenty major squares were built or proposed in Baltimore. Growing out of a tradition begun in Europe and carried to the Eastern Seaboard of the United States, these squares were "monuments of urbanity," places that defined Baltimore's social and economic ascent as a world-class city during the nineteenth century.

A residential square is an open green space of regular geometric form, bounded by city streets, and surrounded by a harmonious arrangement of modest residential rowhouses. In Baltimore developers provided green spaces that would remain open to the public, unlike the London precedents which were private, locked gardens.

The importance of these squares to New York is illustrated by Henry James in his book *Washington Square*. He wrote: "The ideal of quiet and genteel retirement, in 1835, was found in Washington Square."

The squares in Baltimore were within a one to two mile radius of the harbor basin. Their location was further enhanced by the introduction of an omnibus system in 1844. *The Sun* wrote, "These lines [tend] to enhance the value of the property in the outskirts of the city, enabling persons to reside at a distance from their places of business in more healthy locations without loss of time and fatigue in walking."

On March 1, 1900, Baltimore's squares came under the jurisdiction of the Public Parks Commission. The annual report for that year lists twenty squares, several of which are no longer in existence, such as Mt. Royal Terrace and Perkins Square.

Mark Cameron  
Morgan State University



*A blurred specter walks through the ruins lining Water Street (looking south) in the aftermath of the Great Baltimore Fire of 1904. Courtesy of the Maryland Historical Society.*

*You have never seen, on the lap of nature, so large a burden so neatly accommodated. Baltimore sits there as some quite robust but almost unnaturally good child might sit on the green apron of its nurse, with no concomitant crease or crumple, no uncontrollable "mess," by the nursery term, to betray its temper.*

Henry James

## The Baltimore *Afro-American's* Crusade Against Racism in Employment, 1892–1950

From its founding in 1892 to the present, the Baltimore *Afro-American* has been the main media outlet for Baltimore's black community. As such, through editorial advocacy and news coverage, it has supported efforts to end racial discrimination and segregation, especially regarding employment. As with many of its other crusades for racial justice, the *Afro-American's* crusades for equitable job opportunities laid the groundwork for racism in employment to diminish considerably, though not completely in the years since 1950. Ironically and tragically, by the time the racial barriers to employment in Baltimore were lowered, technological and global economic changes destroyed many of the jobs previously barred to blacks, leaving inordinate numbers as impoverished as before.

Hayward Farrar  
Virginia Tech

## Political Cooperation, Economic Competition: Relationships Between Jewish and Black Communities in Baltimore, Maryland, 1930–1940

An examination of the inter-ethnic tensions between Jewish and Black communities in Baltimore during the Depression reveals that they were rooted in classic economic issues such as jobs. Middle and working class Jews and Blacks had very different interactions and perceptions of the other group than did Blacks and Jews in leadership positions. The interaction between working and middle class Jews and Blacks centered around their daily business transactions with members of the other group, most often in merchant/consumer or landlord/tenant situations. These interactions tended to give them unfavorable views of members of the opposite group because of the natural tensions involved in such transactions. The upper-middle-class leadership of each community, in contrast, tended to be more removed from the tense and competitive economic interactions in which their poorer counterparts were involved. This position enabled them to view members of the opposite group in a more sophisticated way, separating leaders from followers. Ultimately, the views that Blacks and Jews held of one another were more class-based than they were ethnicity-based.

Lillian Howard Potter  
Hollins College



## From New Deal Promise to Postmodern Defeat: A Baltimore Housing Project

In August 1995, the City of Baltimore threw a party to celebrate the demolition of the high rises at Lafayette Courts. A crowd of 2,500 witnessed one of the largest multi-structure implosions in the Western Hemisphere. While some former Lafayette residents in the crowd protested, most seemed to share the official view that the best way to deal with the project's severe problems was to tear it down and start all over again.

Ironically, when it opened in 1955, Lafayette Courts represented the latest thinking among housing officials. To Baltimore's black population, suffering from an acute shortage of decent, affordable housing, it promised opportunity for a better life. Lafayette opened with celebration and hope in April 1955.

There can be no doubt that the housing was sorely needed by Baltimore's black population; more than 2,000 families applied for apartments. But serious problems soon became apparent in Lafayette and other high rise public housing projects built around the nation in the 1950s and 1960s. As these problems grew, the social evils associated with poverty — crime, unemployment, welfare dependency, teenage pregnancy — seemed to the public to concentrate in these massive structures. In the media, in policy debates, and in the public mind, high rise public housing came to symbolize one of the most telling examples of failed liberalism — good intentions gone bad.

*Deborah Weiner  
West Virginia University*



*Aerial view of the Lafayette Courts implosion in which six eleven-story buildings were demolished in about twenty seconds. Photograph by Perry Thorsvik. Photo originally appeared in the Baltimore Sun.*



*The old charm, in truth, still survives in [Baltimore] despite the frantic efforts of the boosters and boomers who, in late years, have replaced all its ancient cobblestones with asphalt, and bedizened it with Great White Ways and suburban boulevards, and surrounded it with stinking steel plants and oil refineries, and increased its population from 400,000 to 800,000.*

H. L. Mencken

## From Homogeneity to Diversity: Residential Development in Baltimore's Outer City

As Baltimore's outer city population soared between World War I and the mid-Fifties so did the spread of city terrain. Nationwide the size of urban building lots went up from one-fifteenth of an acre in the Nineties, to one-ninth in the Twenties, to one-sixth in the Fifties. In Baltimore, the spread was manifested in row houses built with rear and front yards and which previously had mostly been an amenity for affluent classes and in detached, yard-on-four-sides brick and frame homes built for middle and working classes.

Federal government programs of the late Forties and Fifties — VA mortgage guarantees, housing laws that favored new development over rehab, and especially the 43,000 miles of Federal Interstate Highway that touched off beltways and expressways — spawned the last forty years of suburban development.

In Baltimore, residential architecture of various sizes and amenities built to be accessible to public transit

molded clusters of blocks that encouraged a measure of class heterogeneity compared to new out-of-the city development: Guilford next to Penn Lucy, Ten Hills next to West Hills, Ashburton and Sequoia Avenue a short walk from lower Park Heights.

With poor neighborhoods next to affluent areas in Baltimore, public institutions get shared: branch libraries with an affluent and public assistance clientele, subway stops in the Northwest corridor, main streets with small on-the-street shopping districts, and regional police districts, for example. Class diversity places the affluent in more contact with the less so and sometimes puts them in the service of the less affluent for maintenance and betterment of shared city institutions and services.

Roderick N. Ryon  
Towson State University

## Baltimore's Abbreviated Interstate System: The Consequence of Opposition, Legislation, and Federal Intervention

Baltimore had ambitious plans for highway building. Capitalizing on generous federal funding formulas, Baltimore intended to bring Interstates 70, 83 and 95 into and through its central core. City officials, business leaders and planners believed that the interstates would ease traffic congestion, encourage downtown redevelopment, and make Baltimore's industrial facilities more accessible. But Interstates 70, 83, and 95 never met, and they never pierced the downtown core. I-83 is a dead end that stops abruptly at Gay Street just northeast of downtown. I-70 never even crossed the city line, and I-95, running north from Washington, turns east well south of the central

city. All in all, nearly 10 miles of Baltimore's planned 31.5 miles of interstates never got built.

In the end, historic and environmental concerns, neighborhood opposition, the politics of condemnation, and the federal government's own best efforts slowed and eventually halted the highway building process in Baltimore. Today, quirky dead ends and the abandonment of some highway routes altogether characterize Baltimore's abbreviated interstate highway system.

*Susan West Montgomery*  
*George Washington University*



*The Jones Falls Expressway under construction. Photograph originally appeared in the Baltimore Sun.*



## Baltimore's Public Schools in a Time of Transition

The 1970s witnessed the transformation of the Baltimore schools from white to black. The events of the 1970s showed the high degree of racial tension within the schools at a time when most of the students were black and most of the teachers were white. The disruptions in the schools sent a signal to middle-class residents that they could not expect the schools to perform the same way in the 1970s as they had in the previous decades.

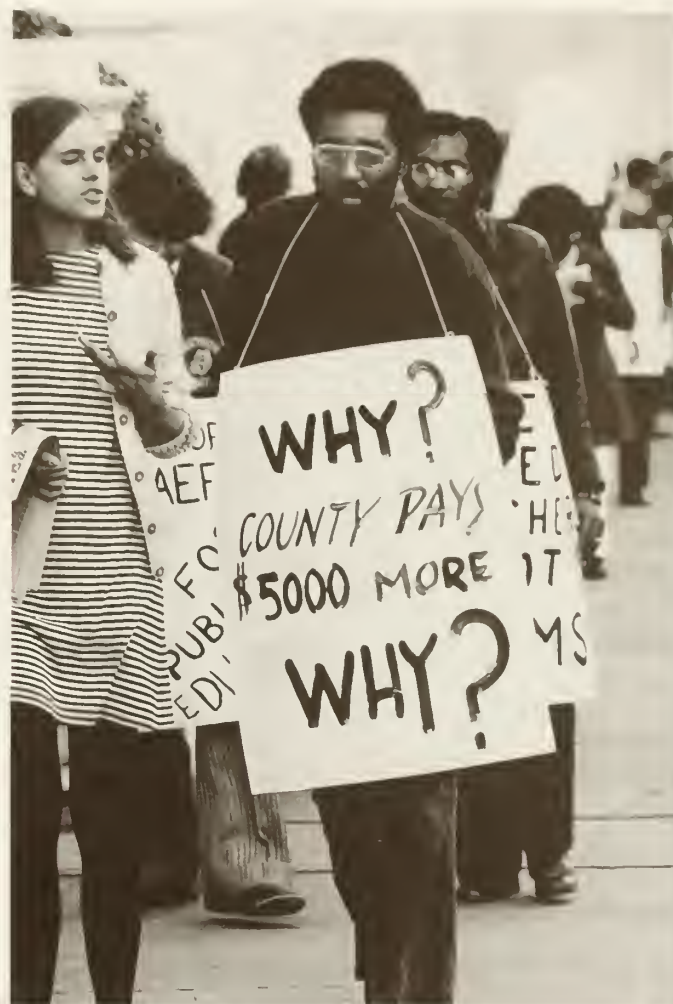
The 1974 Baltimore teacher's strike indicated that teachers shared the frustrations of the middle class parents. They felt unappreciated. It appeared to the teachers as though the city was unwilling to spend the necessary money to fund quality schools. The city, for its part, felt trapped by the economic stringency of the era. More money for education meant higher taxes which translated into middle class flight which would produce less tax money for education. The only solution was to appeal to outside authorities in Washington and Annapolis to come to the city's aid.

The federal desegregation order showed that all external aid came with strings. If the city received federal help, it needed to comply with federal mandates, including the elimination of segregated schools. The more the city tinkered with mechanisms to produce racial integration — a concept that could only mean racially proportionate schools in a school system that was 70 percent black — the more it risked losing its white, middle-class residents. If these residents were to leave the city or withdraw their children from the schools, the situation only became worse, getting federal funds in the short-run and making the city worse off in the long-run. In the 1970s, unlike in the 1960s, the federal government imposed mandates on localities without providing the financial means for the localities to fulfill those mandates.

The 1954 Brown decision provided the impetus for the city to take steps toward integration that many people already favored. The court decisions of the 1970s forced the city to take steps with which many people disagreed. In the 1950s the court was the vehicle of progressive change; in the 1970s, the court was widely regarded as insensitive to local economic and social conditions.

*Ed Berkowitz*

*George Washington University*



*Teachers picket during the 1974 teachers' strike in Baltimore City. Photo originally appeared in the Baltimore Sun.*

# Humanities in the Nation



*William R. Ferris, Chairman, NEH.*

## Ferris Selected to Head Humanities Agency

Professor William R. Ferris, scholar of the American South at the University of Mississippi has been selected by President Clinton to head the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Ferris is the founder and director of the Center for the Study of Southern Culture at the university, where he also established a center for the study of the blues musical tradition. He is the co-editor, with Charles Reagan Wilson, of the *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*.

A native of Vicksburg, Mississippi, the 55-year-old Ferris received his bachelor's degree from Davidson College, his master's from Northwestern University, and his doctorate from Penn State. He is an anthropologist and folklorist and has taught English at Jackson State University and Afro-American and American studies at Yale University. He is the author of several books including *Blues From the Delta* and *Images of the South: Visits With Eudora Welty and Walker Evans*. His film, *Mississippi Delta Blues*, was featured at the Cannes Film Festival in 1969.

## Recent NEH Grants

The following Maryland institutions recently received grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Washington, DC.

**Key School, Annapolis**  
**Charles M. Flanagan, Project Director**

Up to \$23,000 in outright funds to support a faculty study and curriculum development project on Colonial American history for elementary and secondary school teachers in Annapolis.

**Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore**  
**Nancy E. Davis, Project Director**

Up to \$40,028 in outright funds to support planning by the state historical societies of Maryland, Virginia, and Delaware, of two exhibitions with related public programs about slavery and resistance in the Chesapeake region from 1790 to 1865.

**Prince George's Community College, Largo**  
**Joseph F. Citro, Project Director**

Up to \$149,658 in outright funds to support a four-week institute for 25 high school teachers to study African American life after the Emancipation.

**University of Maryland College Park, College Park**  
**Phyllis Peres, Project Director**

Up to \$140,000 in outright funds to support a five-week institute for 25 college teachers to study the history and culture of Brazil.



# Humanities in Maryland

## From the Resource Center

The following videotapes may be borrowed from the Maryland Humanities Council's Resource Center. For further information call Polly Weber at 410-625-4830.

### Space and Place: A Drama

This one act play surveys the differences between western and Chinese mapmaking. (Produced by St. John's College with funding from the Maryland Humanities Council, 1996)

### Talk to Me: Americans in Conversation

Interviews with scholars and people from four different communities across the nation explore what "being American" means at the close of the 20th century. (Produced and funded by the National Conversation, National Endowment for the Humanities, 1996)

### Opening the Teackle Mansion Doors

A series of lectures looks at various aspects of the Teackle Mansion located in Princess Anne, Maryland: *An Architectural History*, *Life at Teackle Mansion* (its first inhabitants), *A Neat and Genteel Abode* (early 19th-century furnishings), and *Early 19th Century Gardens*. (Produced by Old Princess Anne Days, Inc. with funding from the Maryland Humanities Council, 1995-96)

## Money Available

Nonprofit organizations and community groups are eligible to apply for grants from the Maryland Humanities Council. Staff members will help you plan programs and work on grant applications. To receive a copy of our grant guidelines, call or write the Council (address and phone number on back cover) or retrieve them from the Council's homepage located at <http://www.gcnet.net/mhc>.

There are two kinds of grants. Minigrants (requests of \$1,200 or less) should be submitted at least six weeks before your project begins; there are no set deadlines for minigrants. Regular grants should be submitted by the following deadlines for consider in the next round:

First Draft	Final Draft	Decision Date
June 15, 1998	July 31, 1998	September 19, 1998

## Maryland Humanities Council Board

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# Maryland Bookshelf

## Recent Releases

*The Salaryman's Wife*, Sujata Massey  
*College Keys: Getting In, Doing Well & Avoiding the 4 Big Mistakes*, Roger W. McIntire

*Where Monsoons Cry*, Lalita Noronha-Blob

*Disappearing Delmarva: Portraits of the Peninsula People*, Ed Okonowicz

*Seeing a Large Cat*, Elizabeth Peters

*In Foreign Parts: Nine Stories*, Elisabeth Stevens

*Cold Waves*, David Stone

*Robert's Rules in Plain English*, Doris P. Zimmerman

## Chesapeake Bay

*John M. Barber's Chesapeake*, John M. Barber

*Chesapeake Legacy: Tools and Traditions*, Larry S. Chowning

*Forgotten Beacons: The Lost Lighthouses of the Chesapeake*, Patrick Hornberger and Linda Turbyville

*An Island Out of Time: A Memoir of Smith Island in the Chesapeake*, Tom Horton

*Oyster Cans*, Jim and Vivian Karsnitz

*Chesapeake Bay in the Civil War*, Eric Mills

*In the Vestibule: True Ghost Stories From the Delmarva Peninsula to the Jersey Shore*, Ed Okonowicz

*Myrtle Kennedy — Her Life and Cherished Memories*, Lionel Petrilli

*Ghost Fleet of Mallows Bay, and Other Tales of the Lost Chesapeake*, Donald G. Shomette

*Bay Beacons: Lighthouses of the Chesapeake Bay*, Linda Turbyville

*Lighting the Bay: Tales of Chesapeake Lighthouses*, Pat Vojtech

## Maryland

*Baltimore 1797–1997*, Amy Bernstein

*Bay Shore Park: The Death and Life of an Amusement Park*, Victoria Crenson

*Sailing the James, York, Rappahannock, Potomac, and Patuxent*, Robert De Gast

*A Southern Star for Maryland: Maryland and the Secession Crisis, 1860–61*, Lawrence M. Denton

*It All Started on Winters Lane: A History of the Black Community in Catonsville, Maryland*, Louis Diggs

*You Should Have Been Here Yesterday: A Guide to Cultural Documentation in Maryland*, Elaine Eff

*Muffled Drums and Mustard Spoons, Cecil County, Maryland 1860–1865*, Jerre Garrett

*Like a Phoenix I'll Rise: An Illustrated History of African Americans in Prince George's County, Maryland (1696–1996)*, Karen Williams Gooden and Alvin Thornton

*Windsor Hills, 1895–1995*, Sara Hartman

*Baltimore's Light Rail: Then and Now*, Herbert H. Harwood, Jr.

*Columbia: a Celebration*, photos by David Hobby, text by Susan Thornton Hobby

*Baltimore's Past: A Directory of Historical Sources*, Thomas L. Hollowak, Margaret Burri and Gerard Rainville

*70 Years From Overlea to Bel Air*, C. Clark Jones

*Dr. Mudd and the Lincoln Assassination: The Case Reopened*, John Paul Jones

*Uncommon Threads: Threads that Wove the Fabric of Baltimore Jewish Life*, Philip Kahn, Jr.

*Money and Banking in Maryland*, Denwood N. Kelly, Armand M. Shank, Jr., and Thomas S. Gordon



*The President Is at Camp David*, W. Dale Nelson

*Michael Olesker's Baltimore: If You Live Here, You're Home*, Michael Olesker

*Blockbusting in Baltimore: The Edmondson Village Story*, W. Edward Orser

*History of My Own Times*, William Otter

*Courts of Admiralty in Colonial America: The Maryland Experience, 1643–1776*, David R. Owen and Michael C. Tolley

*The Jacob Engelbrecht Death Ledger, 1820–1890*, Paw Prints (publisher)

*The National Road*, Karl Raitz, editor

*Conversations in a Country Store*, Hal Roth

*A Century of Striving for Justice: The Maryland State Bar Association, 1896–1996*, James F. Schneider

*Tidewater Time Capsules: History Beneath the Patuxent*, Donald G. Shomette

*Greetings From Baltimore: Scenes of the City's Colorful Postcard Past*, Bert Smith

*Hey, Hon! How to Talk Like a Real Bawlamoron*, Ernest Smith

*St. Vincent de Paul of Baltimore*, Thomas W. Spaulding and Kathryn M. Kuranda



## Zassenhaus Named Member Emerita

The Maryland Humanities Council Board of Directors unanimously elected Hilgunt Margret Zassenhaus as a member emerita at its May 1997 meeting. Zassenhaus, a retired Towson physician, has served on the Council's board since her appointment by Governor Harry Hughes in 1979.

Zassenhaus has received numerous medals, awards, and recognitions for her work in saving the lives of Scandinavian prisoners of war in Germany. Her work in resistance to the Third Reich resulted in her receiving medals from the Danish and Norwegian Red Cross and being knighted by the kings of Norway and Denmark. She was awarded the

Highest Civilian Order, Bundesverdienstkreuz, First Class, by the President of the West German Republic in 1969, and in 1986 she was awarded the Memorial Medal in Gold by the Senate of the City of Hamburg, West Germany. In 1974, Zassenhaus was nominated by the Norwegian government for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Zassenhaus is the author of *On Guard in the Dark* and her autobiography, *Walls*. Her life has been examined in two documentaries — *It Mattered to Me* and *A Salute of Maryland Women*.

In a 1990 article for *Maryland Humanities*, Zassenhaus wrote:

*... people tried to label me as a hero, but there are no heroes. How easy it would be just to divide people into heroes and villains. Yet the truth as I experienced it, is that to be human means that we have choices, not only in extraordinary times, but every day here and now. . . . We tend to be preoccupied with the notion that we, as individuals, "cannot do anything" when in fact the truth is that history is not written by the events that make headlines. It is written by us each single day.*

The Maryland Humanities Council is pleased to honor Hilgunt Zassenhaus in recognition of her life-long commitment to making a difference.

## New Directors Elected to Council Board

The Maryland Humanities Council announces the election of eight new board members. They are Jeanne Eckardt Blinkoff, Peter C. Brooks, Nguyen Minh Chau, Myrna Goldenberg, John Lamkin, Barry Tuckwell, George B. Udvarhelyi, and Josephine S. Williams.

Jeannie Eckardt Blinkoff, Silver Spring, serves on the boards of the Washington Adventist Hospital Foundation, the American Heart Association, the Montgomery Community College (Nominating Board), and Montgomery County Benefit for the Arts. She is chair of Congressman Albert Wynn's Artistic Discovery Committee.

Peter C. Brooks, Havre de Grace, is director of media arts at Coppin State College. His column on computer applications and technology, appears monthly in *Minority Business Enterprise*. He has served as photographer, radio announcer, video/television producer, director, writer, and consultant.

Nguyen Minh Chau, Garrett Park, is a business executive with over 25 years experience in survey/market research, information processing, and management consulting. She is currently executive vice president and chief operating officer of Opportunity Systems, Inc.

Myrna Goldenberg, Potomac, is professor of English and director of the Humanities Institute at Montgomery College. She has published extensively on the Holocaust, women, and Jewish studies.

John Lamkin, Princess Anne, is director of bands and an instructor in the fine arts department at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. He directs the Concert Band and the Jazz Ensemble and teaches music courses.

Barry Tuckwell, Hagerstown, is a master French Horn soloist, a distinguished conductor, and the music director of the Maryland

Symphony Orchestra which he founded in 1982. He has held a number of positions, including first horn chair and chairman of the board of directors with the London Symphony Orchestra and chief conductor of the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra.

George B. Udvarhelyi, Baltimore, is professor emeritus, neurosurgery at The Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions. He was the inspiration for the creation of its Office of Cultural Affairs, for which he was awarded the 1996 Eisenberg Prize for Excellence in the Humanities.

Josephine S. Williams, University Park, is dean of arts and sciences and executive producer of the fine arts center at Charles County Community College. She has nearly 30 years of teaching experience and is a member of the Milton Society of America, the Shakespeare Association of America, and the Mattawoman Creek Art Center.

# Kennedy and Linville Awarded Eisenberg Prize

The Maryland Humanities Council awarded the 1997 *Eisenberg Prize for Excellence in the Humanities* to Ellen Conroy Kennedy and Lyle E. Linville at a dinner at the Johns Hopkins Club in Baltimore on October 21, 1997. The awards committee divided the prize between two honorees this year, because it felt that both nominees had made excellent and significant contributions to public understanding and appreciation of one or more of the humanities disciplines.

Ellen Conroy Kennedy is the founder of the Howard County Poetry and Literature Society. Among

her many accomplishments, Kennedy was nominated for the National Book Award in Translation for Albert Camus' *Lyrical and Critical Essays*. She continually delights the public by producing HoCoPoLitSo's ongoing television series, *The Writing Life*, featuring one-on-one conversations with well-known poets and writers. This outstanding program reaches millions of viewers annually.

Professor of history at Prince George's Community College and coordinator of many humanities projects, Lyle E. Linville is held in high esteem by his colleagues, students, and the public. *The Blues*

*Project*, one of his most recent endeavors, attracted over 20,000 people and was critically acclaimed on local and national levels. The project became a national radio series and has been heard on more than twenty-six public radio stations throughout the country.

The *Eisenberg Prize for Excellence in the Humanities*, a cash award totaling \$3,000, was established by Sandy and Gerson Eisenberg in 1995. The Eisenbergs are long-time supporters of the humanities in Maryland. Sandy Eisenberg is a member of the board of directors of the Maryland Humanities Council.



Left to right: Judy Dobbs, Deputy Director, Maryland Humanities Council; Frances Glendening, First Lady, State of Maryland; and Ellen Conroy Kennedy, HoCoPoLitSo.





*Lyle E. Linville, Eisenberg Prize winner from Prince George's Community College.*

*All Photos by  
Richard Lippenholz*



*Eisenberg Prize winner Ellen Conroy Kennedy, and Robert B. Kershaw, Chairman and President, Maryland Humanities Council.*



*From left: Gerson Eisenberg, Frances Glendening, and Sandy Eisenberg.*

## Family Matters Concludes Fall Programs

*Family Matters*, the Maryland Humanities Council's innovative reading/discussion program for inner city youth and their adult family partners, has just completed its fourth series. This fall's programs took place in Baltimore at Cherrydale, Latrobe Homes and Murphy Homes, as well as at the YWCA's Transitional Housing.

The Maryland Humanities Council extends its thanks to the many people who made this program a success including: Stanley "Bunjo" Butler, griot; Michael Brodie, guest author; Romaine Chase-Bobbit, Glenda Lee and Cleoda Walker, discussion leaders at Cherrydale; Patricia Hargis and Marian Johnson, discussion leaders at Latrobe Homes; Ann Marie Davis and Ronnie Lockwood, discussion leaders at Murphy Homes; and Pat Hendricks, Juanita Miller, and Roxie Washington, discussion leaders at the YWCA.

A special word of thanks goes to the staff of our collaborating partners — Thelma Millard, Harriet Johnson, and Carla Gardner from the Housing Authority of Baltimore City and Monalisa DeGross and Deborah Taylor from the Enoch Pratt Free Library. The Council also wishes to acknowledge the work of its staff members Judy Dobbs, Margitta Golladay, Renee Gordon, and Belva Scott. Ms. Scott recently joined the Council staff as program specialist for Council-conducted programs.

*Family Matters* is made possible through the support of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Enterprise Foundation, the Jacob and Hilda Blaustein Foundation, the Margaret Alexander Edwards Trust, The William G. Baker, Jr. Memorial Fund, and the USF&G Foundation. We thank them for their generous gifts.



*Above: Christina Lane with Major Elmer Dennis, Commanding Officer, Baltimore Police Department, South District. Below: Kenesha and Ashley Grey of Cherrydale enjoy refreshments at the final session and reception at the Pratt.*



*James Michael Brodie, author of Sweet Words So Brave, autographs a book for a young fan.*





Above left: Griot Stanley Bunjo Butler shares a story during a Family Matters program. Above right: Marie McClary and her daughter, Charone McClary (Cherrydale) read a book together during one of the weekly reading/discussion meetings. Below: The Family Matters reading group at Murphy Homes. Photos by Judy Dobbs and Belva Scott.



## Suggested Readings

The following books were read by different groups during our *Family Matters* programs. Your family might enjoy sharing these books with each other as well.

*I Am The Darker Brother: An Anthology of Modern Poems by African Americans*, Arnold Adoff, editor

*My Black Me: A Beginning Book of Black Poetry*, Arnold Adoff, editor

*Through Loona's Door: A Tammy and Owen Adventure With Carter G. Woodson*, Tonya Bolen (illustrated by Luther Knox)

*Circle of Gold*, Candy Dawson Boyd

*More Than Anything Else (The Young Life of Booker T. Washington)*, Marie Bradby (illustrated by Chris K. Soentpiet)

*Sweet Words So Brave: The Story of African American Literature*, James Michael Brodie and Barbara K. Curry (illustrated by Jerry Butler)

*Ben Carson: Gifted Hands (abridged version)*, Ben Carson with Cecil Murphey and Nathan Aaseng

*Donavan's Word Jar*, Monalisa DeGross (illustrated by Cheryl Hanna)

*Spin A Soft Black Song*, Nikki Giovanni

*Night On Neighborhood Street*, Eloise Greenfield (illustrated by Jan S. Gilchrist)

*Meet Danitra Brown*, Nikki Grimes (illustrated by Floyd Cooper)

*Can A Coal Scuttle Fly?*, artist Tom Miller, words by Camay Calloway Murphy

*Bill Pickett: Rodeo-Ridin' Cowboy* Andrea D. Pinkney (illustrated by Brian Pinkney)

*Dear Benjamin Banneker*, Andrea D. Pinkney (illustrated by Brian Pinkney)

*Tar Beach*, Faith Ringgold (illustrated by Faith Ringgold)

*Minty: A Story of Young Harriet Tubman*, Alan Schroeder (illustrated by Jerry Pinkney)

*Justin and the Best Biscuits in the World*, Mildred Pitts Walter



# Need a Speaker? Book One of Ours — Free!

During 1997 and 1998, the Maryland Humanities Council is presenting its second series of *Speakers Bureau* programs throughout the state. Outstanding humanities scholars are available for presentations, without charge, to civic and community groups in Maryland. The Council pays for the scholar's honorarium and travel expenses — all the sponsoring organization must do is provide a space and an audience. To receive a booklet about the *Speakers Bureau*, or to learn how you can book one of the speakers listed below, call Polly Weber at 410-625-4830.

## 1998 Speakers Bureau

*A Baltimore Treasure Hunt: Looking at Masterpieces in Local Museums*  
Julie Badiee

*A Fiery Passage: Children and Adolescents in the Civil War*  
Peter W. Bardaglio

*How to Search for Your Roots*  
Agnes Kane Callum

*Folding a Towel: Amish Domestic Life*  
John Charles Camp

*Social Justice and Conscience Movements in this Century*  
Marsha Jean Darling

*Bicycling Across History: Following the Trek West of Our Mid-19th Century Ancestors*  
David M. Dean

*Mummies and Magic: The Burial Practices and Funerary Religion of Ancient Egypt*  
Bernard Fishman

*The Lost Towns of Anne Arundel Archaeology Project*  
James Gibb

*The Holocaust in History and Contemporary Society*  
Bjorn Krondorfer

*Mercy Amidst the Mischief and Misery: The True Story of Civil War Medicine*  
Burton K. Kummerow

*The Presence of the Past: African-American Culture and Race Relations in Historical Perspective*  
Carla Peterson

*The Harlem Renaissance Movement, Its Art and Politics*  
Priscilla Ramsey

*Ethnicity and Language: The Roots of Maryland's Dialects*  
Julie Ries

*Bygone Baltimore — A History of Our City and Its Development from 1729 to the Present*  
Wayne Schaumburg

*Bosnia: An Exploration of Cultural Myths and Cultural Realities*  
George L. Scheper

*Frederick Law Olmsted: His Legend and His Legacy*  
Judith Smith

*Tea Parties and Tyranny: Political Protest and Private Property in Late-Colonial Maryland*  
Gregory A. Stiverson

*Myth as Mirror of Society*  
Marianne Strong

*Environmental Ethics in an Age of Global Concern*  
Paul Wapner

*Diverse Good Causes: Manumission and the Meaning of Freedom in Early National Maryland*  
T. Stephen Whitman



## On the Web

One of America's most distinguished authors, Edgar Allan Poe, can be found on the Maryland Humanities Council's homepage located at [www.gcnet.net.mhc](http://www.gcnet.net.mhc). A poet and literary critic, Poe also had a genius for writing tales including the first detective story, thus laying the groundwork for many others to enjoy lucrative careers as writers in this genre. To learn about other firsts that hail from Baltimore, check out the list of "Firsts" at [www.pratt.lib.med.us/mayor/bicenten/america/firsts](http://www.pratt.lib.med.us/mayor/bicenten/america/firsts).

## FREE Reading/Discussion Programs!

The Maryland Humanities Council is sponsoring a series of free reading/discussion programs for local libraries, senior centers, and community groups throughout the state. Series themes include *Voices and Visions* (American poetry), *Families*, and *Democracy in America*. A scholar selected by the Council will present background information on the authors and their works and lead a discussion about issues raised in the reading. The Council will pay for the scholar's honorarium and travel expenses and supply the books and tapes to be discussed. The host organization is responsible for publicizing and conducting the program and for returning the books to the Council so that others may use them. For further information, contact Margitta Golladay, 410-625-4830.

## Speakers Bureau — 1998-99 Season

The Maryland Humanities Council is now accepting applications from prospective speakers for the 1998 season. The bureau will consist of humanities scholars who will offer presentations to community groups. Each speaker will give four presentations per year from November 1, 1998 through October 31, 1999. Any humanities scholar who is a resident of Maryland or who is employed in Maryland is eligible to apply. Scholars may draw their themes from any humanities area from history to ethics, from ancient philosophy to modern art criticism. Topics must encourage discussion between the speaker and the audience. Speakers will receive an honorarium of \$250 per presentation plus travel expenses.

A council committee will review written applications and select finalists to audition on Thursday, April 16, 1998 and Friday, April 17, 1998. Finalists will be asked to present a fifteen-minute preview of their topic and respond to questions from the selection committee. Scholars selected from this group will join the Council's Speakers Bureau for 1998-99. For further information, contact Polly Weber at 410-625-4830.

## Exhibits — Free to a Good Home!

The Maryland Humanities Council has three poster exhibits that it is giving away free to a good home. Each exhibit is mounted on freestanding cardboard kiosks that are easy to assemble and store. The exhibits are:

*The Blessings of Liberty*: Explores themes related to the U.S. Constitution such as "The Founder's Achievement" and "The Supreme Law of the Land."

*To Preserve These Rights*: Explores themes related to the Bill of Rights such as "Liberty and Property" and "Due Process of Law — Protection for All."

*Seeds of Change*: Explores the significant biological, cultural, and political changes that resulted from the encounter of Europeans and New World civilizations by looking at five "seeds" — sugar, maize, the potato, the horse, and disease.

If you are interested in having one of these exhibits, please call Polly Weber, 410-625-4830.

## FOR SALE

*Great tote bags, t-shirts, and coffee mugs featuring famous Maryland authors*

Each item features a caricature and quotation by one of six famous Marylanders: Frederick Douglass, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Zora Neale Hurston, H.L. Mencken, Edgar Allan Poe, or Gertrude Stein. Tote bags of 100% natural cotton duck (15" x 16") are \$8 each; t-shirts of 100% natural preshrunk cotton are \$13 each (Fitzgerald design not available); and coffee mugs are \$8 each (a set of all six designs is \$35.). Caricatures and quotations can be viewed on the Council's homepage located at [www.gcnet.net/mhc](http://www.gcnet.net/mhc) or by calling 410-625-4830 to request a sales flyer.

Prices include Maryland sales tax, postage, and handling. Delivery time is approximately two weeks. Orders may be placed by calling Renee Gordon at 410-625-4830 or via mail. Payment can be made by VISA, MasterCard, or American Express or by personal check or money order.

## Calendar of Humanities Events

The following programs are receiving funds from the Maryland Humanities Council. Council grants are made possible through major support from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Maryland's Division of Cultural and Historical Programs, corporations, foundations, and individuals. Since dates and times are subject to change, we recommend you contact the project director before attending any event.

### Exhibits

Ongoing      **Dr. Elias Joseph Marsh: Civil War Surgeon**

Examines the life and work of Civil War surgeon Dr. Elias Joseph Marsh and the major advances made in medicine during that era.

Location: National Museum of Civil War Medicine, Frederick

Contact: Debby Moone, 301-695-1864

Sponsor: National Museum of Civil War Medicine

Through February 1998      **The Language of Art in Traditional African Life**

Explores African art — its symbolic language, socio-religious functions, and influence on contemporary art.

Location: Washington County Museum, Hagerstown

Contact: Philip Allen, 301-687-4090

Sponsor: Frostburg State University

### Guides

Ongoing

#### Historic Marker Brochure

Examines eight architectural styles and how they changed over time. The brochure is tied to color-coded markers on historical structures located throughout Annapolis.

Locations: William Paca House, Old Treasury Shiplap House, Museum Store, and Conference and Visitor's Bureau, Annapolis

Contact: Alecia Parker, 410-267-8149

Sponsor: Historic Annapolis Foundation, Inc.

Spring 1998

#### A Layperson's Guide to Historical Archaeology in Maryland

Introduces basic concepts in Maryland historical archeology. The 40-page guide is illustrated with examples from ongoing research at two colonial towns in the Annapolis area: Providence (1649–1700) and London (1683–1783).

Location: Distributed to volunteers, university interns, Boy Scouts, and middle school teachers at the Anne Arundel Archaeology Laboratory, Annapolis

Contact: Jason Moser, 410-222-7441

Sponsor: The Anne Arundel County Trust for Preservation



Ongoing **Driving Tour Brochure, Historic Sites Consortium of Queen Anne's County**

Guides visitors and local residents through historic sites and cultural resources of Queen Anne's County. The publication is available free of charge from visitor centers and local historic sites and businesses.

Location: Various sites in Queen Anne's County

Contact: *Marsha Fritz, 410-778-5143*

Sponsor: Historic Sites Consortium of Queen Anne's County

**Eyewinkers, Tumbleturds and Candlebugs: The Art of Elizabeth Talford Scott**

Call for times  
February 7  
February 21

Examines the work of African-American quilt artist Elizabeth Talford Scott through an exhibit, lectures, and a symposium.

Locations: Maryland Institute, College of Art, Baltimore; Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore

Contact: *Leslie King-Hammond, 410-669-9200 extension 255*

Sponsor: Maryland Institute, College of Art

## Lectures

**Bygone Baltimore — A History of Our City and Its Development from 1729 to the Present**

12:15 PM  
February 5

Wayne Schaumburg traces Baltimore's history from its days as a tobacco town to the recent urban renaissance.

Location: Darnall's Chance, Upper Marlboro

Contact: *Polly Weber, 410-625-4830*

Sponsor: Maryland Humanities Council Speakers Bureau

**Maryland Women I'd Like to Have Met**

Gregory Stiverson looks at a dozen Maryland women — plus the state's suffragettes — as examples of people who made important contributions to the colony and state despite the formidable obstacles posed by their gender.

February 13  
1:00 PM  
March 5  
5:00 PM

Location: Millington Elementary School, Millington

Location: Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore

Contact: *Polly Weber, 410-625-4830*

Sponsor: Maryland Humanities Council Speakers Bureau

**Windows on Music**

7:00 PM  
February 6  
March 6

Musicologist Rachel Franklin addresses the historical, literary, and cultural contexts of works by 20th-century composers Swantner, Previn, Ginastera, Dunner, and Prokofieff.

Location: Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts, Annapolis

Contact: *Pamela Chaconas, 410-269-1132*

Sponsor: Annapolis Symphony Orchestra Association

**The Holocaust in History and Contemporary Society**

8:30 AM  
February 18

Bjorn Krondorfer explores how understanding the historic events of the Holocaust are still relevant for today's society.

Location: St. Mary's Ryken High School, Leonardtown

Contact: *Polly Weber, 410-625-4830*

Sponsor: Maryland Humanities Council Speakers Bureau

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### African Women: Between Tradition and Modernity

Call for times  
February 18  
March 6 & 24

Lectures and films examine the significant roles of women in Africa. Topics include African women's contributions in art, politics, and economics, as well as their role in the African Diaspora.

Location: Whitaker Student Center, Hood College, Frederick

Contact: Purnima Bhatt, 301-695-4714

Sponsor: Hood College

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### Ethnicity and Language: The Roots of Maryland's Dialects

11:15 AM  
February 28

Julie Ries looks at how the ways we speak — our pronunciation patterns, our choice of words, and even how we construct our sentences — are driven by rules that have evolved with the influence of our personal histories.

Location: Hood College, Frederick

Contact: Polly Weber, 410-625-4830

Sponsor: Maryland Humanities Council Speakers Bureau

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### Frederick Law Olmsted: His Legend and His Legacy

7:00 PM  
March 11

Judith R. Smith examines the life of Frederick Law Olmsted and his work including urban parks, town planning, and the ecological protection of streams.

Location: Annapolis Roads Garden Club (exact location to be announced)

Contact: Polly Weber, 410-625-4830

Sponsor: Maryland Humanities Council Speakers Bureau

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### Perspectives Pre-Opera Lecture Series

Four scholars provide background on *Falstaff* by Verdi, *Madame Butterfly* by Puccini, *Carmen* by Bizet, and *Der fliegende Hollander* by Wagner.

Times/Dates: 6:30 PM, March 19 and 25,  
7:15 PM, March 21 and 27  
2:00 PM, March 22 and 29

Location: Langsdale Auditorium, University of Baltimore, Baltimore

Contact: Leslie Rehbein Marqua,  
410-625-1600

Sponsor: Baltimore Opera Company

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### Social Justice and Conscience Movements in this Century

March 28  
7:00 PM

Marsha Jean Darling presents an overview of the significant social justice and conscience movements of this century and their roots in early America.

Location: St. Matthew's United Methodist Church, Baltimore

Contact: Polly Weber, 410-625-4830

Sponsor: Maryland Humanities Council Speakers Bureau

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## Coming Soon

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### **The Baltimore Arabbers**

**Documentary** Explores the unique heritage of the Baltimore Arabbers, the horsecart vendors who sell food from wagons throughout the streets of Baltimore. Screenings will take place in neighborhood markets and parks and at local churches, theatres, and cultural institutions.

**Location:** Hollins Market and Sandtown, Baltimore

**Contact:** Joy Lusco, 800-931-3083

**Sponsor:** The Arabber Preservation Society

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### **Magnificent Shoulders: The First All African American Medical School Faculty**

**Documentary** Chronicles the formation of the first African-American medical school faculty at Howard University during the 1930s. The story looks at the impact that early 20th-century medical reforms had on the health care of blacks and examines race relations between the world wars.

**Location:** Washington, DC, New York, and Pennsylvania

**Contact:** Carol Slocum, 301-434-6371

**Sponsor:** Sisters Empowered to Promote Interest and Opportunities in the Arts

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### **Long-time Alley House Residents of East Baltimore**

**Oral History** Examines racial change in a working class neighborhood of historic alley houses in East Baltimore — from Bohemian and Polish immigrants who lived in the houses in the 1890s, to African American residents who moved into the area in the post-World War II era. The tapes and transcriptions of the oral histories will become part of a community archive and will form the basis for a future exhibit at the Great Blacks in Wax Museum.

**Location:** East Baltimore

**Contact:** Mary Ellen Hayward,  
410-625-4585

**Sponsor:** Baltimore Heritage, Inc.

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### **The Johns Hopkins University Civility Project**

**Workshops/lectures** Explores issues of civility, manners, and politeness and their relevance in American society. Students, parents, and faculty will discuss the topic at Patterson High School, Baltimore. At Jessup Correctional Institution two workshops on codes of prison and non-prison behavior have taken place. A series of lectures on *The Manners of Healing: Communication and Civil Exchange* will be presented at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine for physicians, staff, patients, students, and the general public.

**Locations:** Patterson High School, Baltimore; Jessup Correctional Institution, Jessup; and the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, Baltimore

**Contact:** Pier Massimo Forni,  
410-516-8047

**Sponsor:** The Johns Hopkins University

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## Maryland Revisited

It's not just modern day Baltimoreans who like to take a look back at the past. Witness these Charm City thespians who recreated the world of the ancient Greece one sunny afternoon in Druid Hill Park. In the top right photo, Apollo gestures dramatically while in the top left photo Virginia Tanner dances with abandon. And could that be the three graces in the photo on the bottom left?

*All photos courtesy of the Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore.*



# Maryland's Best Kept Humanities Secrets

## Baltimore Streetcar Museum

Baltimore Streetcar Museum

1901 Falls Road

Baltimore, MD 21211

410-547-0264

Director: John O'Neill

Open year round on Sundays

Noon – 5 PM

Open Saturdays, June – October

Noon – 5 PM

Admission:

Adults, \$5.00

Senior Citizens, \$5.00

Children 4–11, \$2.50

Children under 4, Free

(Family maximum, \$15.00)

The Baltimore Streetcar Museum features displays and exhibits showing early streetcar transportation in Baltimore. The car house contains over a dozen vehicles from the oldest horse car to the last streetcar used in 1963. Admission to the museum includes unlimited rides on original Baltimore streetcars, an audiovisual presentation on Baltimore's streetcar history, and a guided tour of the car house.

For further information about upcoming events at the museum, check out its website, which can be found at [www.baltimoremd.com/streetcar](http://www.baltimoremd.com/streetcar). There you can also find pictures and descriptions of some of the streetcars that are a part of the museum's collection. You can even send an online streetcar postcard to a friend!



*During World War I women were hired to work on the streetcars while Baltimore's sons were overseas fighting the enemy. In this picture, a "conductorette" adjusts the trolley pole on a streetcar. Photo courtesy the Baltimore Streetcar Museum.*

# An Interview with Robert B. Kershaw

By Barbara Wells Sarudy



*Robert B. Kershaw, Chairman and President,  
Maryland Humanities Council.*

*Why do you volunteer to help promote the humanities?*

In 1989, I participated in the Justice and Society Seminar at The Aspen Institute. For the first time since my undergraduate days, I enjoyed two weeks of uninterrupted reading and discussion of classic scholarship and literature. It was a terrifically exciting experience — a watershed event for renewing curiosity and creativity. When you introduced me to the work of the Maryland Humanities Council, I was very excited to learn that its public humanities programs touched the same intellectual excitement I found in Aspen — and better yet made that stimulation available to a large and diverse audience. The interaction I have enjoyed with academics and laypersons involved in public humanities programs through the Council and the Federation of State Humanities Councils over the last five years have greatly strengthened my enthusiasm for promoting the humanities.

*What is the most personal response you have had to the humanities programs you have seen?*

I have been deeply moved by lectures by Martin Marty, Ken Burns, and James Horton, among others. But perhaps my most personal response occurred during a Council-conducted walking tour of Baltimore through the Greek neighborhood of Highlandtown. Our guide was speaking about the importance of generous hospitality to the Greek people. As she spoke, two elderly

Greek women, well out of hearing the talk, were bending over picking herbs which they then presented to us as little gift bouquets. They spoke little or no English, but they expressed volumes about the meaning of hospitality and of our visit to their neighborhood. Public humanities programs are about planting small seeds like this that take root, encourage good thought, and become valued parts of our own life stories.

*What is the most exasperating aspect of promoting the humanities?*

Explaining the meaning and breadth of public humanities in the “sound byte” people expect and regrettably need. Our staff has done a great job addressing this challenge with frequent press releases about the Council’s work, advertising, developing a terrific web page, and even offering promotional gifts. My mouse pad at the office is decorated with our logo and the phrase “CyberHUMANITIES — as much mental stimulation as your mouse can handle.” We have to make the humanities accessible to popular culture by every means available.

*How do the humanities make us more understanding human beings?*

By bridging diverse cultures, histories, philosophies, religions and literature with analytical conversation, inquisitive dialogue and respect. We learn that differences and diversity are our strength, our opportunity, our joy in living — and never the burden they may seem to the closed mind.



*How do the humanities help us cope with our day to day lives?*

Frustration and anxiety are frequently the product of a narrow view. The bigger picture of comparative history, philosophy and culture make our small concerns just that — small. The humanities promote compassion and respect for “the other,” instead of blame for our difficulties. And the refuge of the humanities often takes us beyond merely “coping” to the magic and mystical wonders of living and thinking. I have seen exactly that happen in the faces of the children who participate with their parents in our *Family Matters* reading programs in Baltimore’s public housing projects. When those children hear and meet an author of the book they have read and discussed, and learn that the author’s life experience growing up in the inner city is very like their own, suddenly all things are possible! We have the power with the humanities to step beyond “just getting by” to living

life to the fullest. Taking the hand of a child in that process is a joy beyond description.

*How do the humanities help us deal with our mortality?*

The awesome and wonderful mysteries of birth, life and death are at the heart of all religions, philosophies, and histories. The humanities inform our personal adventure and self examination with the best thought of all who have shared our human experience over the ages. Taking the time and making the effort to see the drama in the language of the humanities is comforting in life and in the homecoming of death.

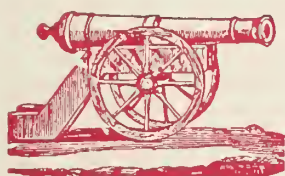
*What is the most rewarding aspect of your volunteer experiences in the humanities?*

Our esteemed director *emerita*, Dr. Margret Zassenhaus, answered this question for me the first time I met her at the Council board meeting in 1994. She said the most valuable part of the humanities

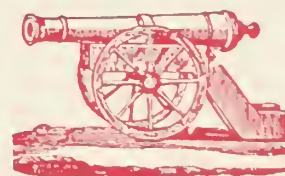
experience will be the friendships with the wonderful scholars and friends of the humanities you will meet. I consider the members of the staff, the Board and our colleagues at the Federation and other state humanities councils among the finest people I have ever worked with.

*What is your personal goal for the Maryland Humanities Council?*

I hope we are successful in raising significant private endowment and annual giving support for public humanities programs in Maryland. In our democracy and pluralistic society, vigorous humanities discourse is essential to our well-being, intellectually and otherwise. The humanities must never be held hostage by the cycles of political agendas, whatever they may be. Both on the private and the public level, I would like to see the Council and its friends advocate reordered spending priorities in favor of the humanities.



*The Spring 1998 issue of  
Maryland Humanities will explore  
the War Between the States*





*There is always a sort of friendly rivalry and tension between Marylanders who live in densely populated Baltimore and those who live in the equally heavily populated Maryland suburbs of Washington, D.C. Because this issue of our magazine celebrates the founding of Baltimore, this story from one famous American writer, might bring a smile to the citizens of the city by the bay.*

*When novelist William Faulkner visited Maryland's DC suburbs in 1954, he wrote of a party he attended there. He mused, "It was the damnedest collection of prosperous . . . stuffed shirt . . . senators and military brass hats and their be-upholstered and be-coiffed beldames as you ever saw. Fortunately, hardly any of them ever heard of me, so I was let alone."*

*Well, we at the Maryland Humanities Council have no intention of ignoring our great humorists and writers. This summer and fall our magazine, as well as our July 4th Chautauqua at Deep Creek Lake in Western Maryland, will celebrate the literary and humorous heritage all Americans share. Please join us.*



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**HUMANITIES**

Maryland Humanities Council  
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(410) 625-4830

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*Maryland*

# HUMANITIES



The Civil War



# To Our Readers

In this issue we take a look at the Civil War. While the Civil War has often been examined by historians and history buffs alike, its stories continue to hold a fascination that inspires further research and exploration. We have found that Marylanders are no different in this regard, and hope to feed your interest further with the articles in this magazine.

Two of our authors, Peter Bardaglio and Burton Kummerow, may already be familiar to you since they have spoken about children during the war era and Civil War medicine, respectively, in sites across the state as a part of the Council's Speakers Bureau. Our other author, Robert Cottom, is a long-time associate of the Council, where he has served as the production editor of *Maryland Humanities* since 1993. We are delighted to bring "Dr. Ric" out from behind the scenes to share center stage as he recounts his experiences as a historian "drafted" into the Civil War reënactment at Antietam.

Also included in this edition of the magazine are Internet sites for learning more about the Civil War from the comfort of your own home as well as a listing of Civil War sites to visit for those times you leave your desk intent upon exploring the "real" world.

We hope you enjoy this issue of *Maryland Humanities*.

*Barbara Wells Sarudy*  
*Executive Director*



*On the cover:*

*Portrait of Pvt. William T. Carter and  
members of the 3rd Maryland Infantry (U.S.).  
Courtesy of the Library of Congress.*

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## Maryland HUMANITIES

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# Under the Gun — Growing Up During the Civil War

By Peter W. Bardaglio

Despite all that has been written on the Civil War, the story of the children and adolescents who became entangled in this great struggle has only begun to be told. How did boys and girls view the war, and what impressions did they take away from their passage through this fiery crucible? Looking at the war through the eyes of these children, what can we learn about how it changed their lives? For southern children and adolescents, the repercussions of invasion, Confederate defeat, and Union occupation stretched far beyond 1865, leaving an indelible imprint on the generation who grew up in the midst of war.

Think for a moment about the thousands of slave children whose fathers escaped behind Union lines. Under slavery, these fathers had found it impossible to exercise full authority over their children and to protect their offspring from the world around them.

The war — especially the recruitment of African American soldiers after 1863 — transformed this situation. Writing his enslaved children, Private Spotswood Rice declared that, if their mistress didn't "give you up this Government will and I feel confident that I will get you." Rice had escaped slavery and become a soldier, and now he was promising to remove his children from bondage, a commitment backed by the power of the Federal government. The impact that these changes had on how black youngsters viewed themselves and their fathers must have been enormous.

For young slaves who stayed on the plantation during the war, one of the most vivid memories involved the arrival of the northern troops. Anticipating the Union advance, white southerners tried to frighten the children with stories about the demonic appearance of the Yankees and the awful atrocities they would commit if the slaves did not escape their clutches. "Us was skeered of dem Yankees," a former Arkansas slave, who was around ten years old at the beginning of hostilities, told an interviewer from the Federal Writers' Project in the late 1930s. No wonder: the overseer had told the black children that "a Yankee was somepin what had one great big horn on he haid and just one eye and dat right in de middle of he breast."

Even more startling for young African Americans was their first encounter with the terrors of battle. "The sound was like eternity had turned loose," recalled Lizzie Dunn. "Everything shook like terrible earthquakes day and night. The light was bright and red and smoke terrible." Raised in bondage, most black children had experienced violence before, but after 1861 they came face to face with killing on an unprecedented scale. As one former slave put it years later, "During the war all the children had fear." He still vividly recalled how, as a boy, he had driven an ox-cart in which he helped load the dead soldiers to take them to the burial grounds.

White youngsters also came face to face with the wrath of war. Their world, too, was turned upside down

by the clash of armies in the countryside and the rush of Union soldiers through the streets of southern towns and cities. Sarah Morgan, in her late teens when Louisiana seceded in 1861, provided one of the most vivid records of life under enemy occupation.

Even before the Yankees reached her home, the war had driven Sarah's family apart. A brother living in New Orleans had joined the Union forces. Three others were off fighting for the Confederacy. Sarah, her two sisters, and widowed mother were left to fend for themselves in Baton Rouge. After the Confederate attempt to regain the city in August 1862, the Federal troops embarked on a widespread campaign of looting. "Ours was the most shockingly treated house in the whole town," reported Sarah. The Yankees made off with china, carpets, and clothing, destroyed family portraits, and smashed furniture. Sarah was especially upset to discover that the looters had rummaged through her private belongings, including letters, a diary she kept when she was twelve years old, and dried roses from male admirers.

Wartime casualties had a powerful impact on southern families, and Sarah Morgan's was no exception. In March 1864 news arrived that two of her brothers in the Confederate army had died of disease. A year later, just days after the surrender at Appomattox, Sarah wrote sadly about the family reunion that would never take place. "Since the boys died, I have constantly thought of what pain it would



*I could in reality no longer claim to be a schoolboy — for I was armed with a gun and been in a battle in which I had espoused both sides . . .*

Ernest Wardwell

bring to see their comrades return without them — to see families reunited, and know that ours never could be again, save in heaven."

Overall, the southern white male population experienced a devastating decline during the war. About 258,000 men were killed out of a total white population of 5,500,000. Such losses led to a sharp increase in the number of widows with children and a marked reduction in the number of marriageable men. Of course, many of the "men" who died in the Civil War on both sides were actually boys. Each of the two armies had recruitment policies that prohibited boys from joining and fighting; for example, the Union insisted that a recruit had to be at least eighteen years old. However, a tall fourteen or fifteen year old could easily pass as an adult in the rush to form a unit, bluffing his way past the recruiting sergeant.

One such boy was Ernest Wardwell of Baltimore. Wardwell was in school on April 19, 1861, when the Sixth Massachusetts Volunteer regiment passed through Baltimore on its way to defend Washington. A crowd attacked the soldiers, who opened fire, and in the riot that followed four soldiers and at least a dozen civilians died in the first bloodshed of the Civil War.

Wardwell and his friend, Henry Cook, left school early when news of the troops reached them, and they raced off to investigate the crowd gathering at the President Street depot. Once there, the boys

became part of a mob that chased the soldiers through the city. Impressed by the restrained response of the Sixth Massachusetts in the face of the violent crowd, Wardwell underwent something like a conversion experience. Impulsively grabbing a fallen soldier's rifle, he fell in with the ranks of the Union army making their way to Camden Station. Wardwell noted, "I could in reality no longer claim to be a schoolboy — for I was armed with a gun and had been in a battle in which I had espoused both sides, and was now travelling at railroad speed to defend the National Capitol."

Rash as his behavior appears, Wardwell was not simply fulfilling a childhood dream to enter the military. The pomp and circumstance of martial rituals obviously held great attraction for the boy, but his experience in the Baltimore riot convinced him of the necessity of fighting on the Union side. Determined to overcome any objections to his enlistment on account of his age, Wardwell insisted, "If I was not old enough to march in the ranks I would begin as a 'drummer boy' — but soldier of some kind I would be, and that too for the 'star spangled flag' and the preservation of the Union."

For most boys, however, the opportunity to take part in what looked like an exciting escapade proved to be the main lure. The easiest way for a boy to join the army was as a musician, especially as a drummer



*Portrait of boy soldier. Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress.*

or bugler. These were considered noncombatant positions, so recruiters often allowed a youth to join without worrying about his age.

Like other soldiers at the outset of the Civil War, when boys enlisted they expected to fight the enemy and settle the dispute quickly. Of course, they were sadly mistaken. What had begun as a rousing adventure became a horrible nightmare that seemed to have no end. Elisha Stockwell found himself facedown on the ground at the Battle of Shiloh, shells exploding overhead and soldiers screaming for help: ". . . as we lay there and the shells were flying over us, my



*Most families remained in their hometowns when the men went off to war, but sometimes wives and children came along, living in camp alongside the soldiers. Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress.*

thoughts went back to home, and I thought what a foolish boy I was to run away and get into such a mess as I was in. I would have been glad to have seen my father coming after me."

More than a few boys had second thoughts once they found themselves caught up in battle, but gradually adjusted to the death and destruction around them. Fighting in a war changes any soldier, but it had a dramatic impact on the boys who fought in the Civil War. Naive, rowdy farmboys in the beginning, they became experienced, skilled killers in a matter of months. No

longer the innocent youths who had signed up to take part in a great crusade, boys in the Union and Confederate armies found themselves immersed in a senseless carnage that no civilian, young or old, could possibly imagine. Living every day with such violence took a heavy emotional toll on these youngsters. As Private Henry Gates observed in a letter home, "I saw the body of a man killed the previous day this morning and a horrible sight it was. Such sights do not effect me as they once did. I can not describe the change nor do I know when it took effect, yet I

know that there is a change for I look on the carcass of a man with pretty much such feeling as I would do were it a horse or hog."

Because most of the war was fought on southern soil, few northern children — outside of those who lied about their age and joined up with the Union army — came into direct contact with the conflict. But thousands of girls and boys in the North had fathers or brothers who went off to war and wrote home about their experiences. Correspondence with fathers or older brothers allowed these youngsters to experience vicariously a faraway war and to make sense out of the changes brought about by the departure of loved ones.

To cite one example, an older brother used his war experiences as a way to forge a stronger relationship with a younger sibling. Writing his brother Hiram, Private Laforest Dunham urged him to "be kind to your father and mother and help them all you can and you never will be sorry for it." The Union soldier used his own life to illustrate the mistakes Hiram should try to avoid: "I have often thought about when I use to do wrong and Pa or Ma would talk to me and tell me I would be sory for it some day, but I could not see it then or pretended so but I can see it now."

Boys and girls on the homefront were not just spectators; they actively participated in efforts to maintain the morale of the troops. Baltimore youth took part in one of the city's most dramatic displays



*The whole landscape had been changed, and I felt as though we were in a strange and blighted land.*

Tillie Pierce

of Unionist loyalty — the 1864 Maryland State Fair for U.S. Soldier Relief. Organized by area women, the fair sought to raise funds and supplies for Union army hospitals. Among the many exhibits at the fair, held at the Maryland Institute, was the Children's Table featuring the sale of children's clothing as well as dolls and toys.

While most young civilians in the North only heard or read about the Civil War, a handful of them actually got swept up in it. When General Robert E. Lee and his Confederate forces entered Pennsylvania during the summer of 1863, few residents of Gettysburg expected that the war would come to their town. But come it did, leaving few of the town's children unscathed. Charles McCurdy, ten years old when the battle erupted, remembered, "The church yard was strewn with arms and legs that had been amputated and thrown out the windows, and all around were wounded men for whom no place had yet been found."

During the battle, parents and children retreated to their cellars, subsisting largely on biscuits and raspberries. When the families reemerged, they found Gettysburg filled with wounded men. In fact, the town of about twenty-five hundred people had to cope with roughly sixteen thousand injured soldiers. All the public buildings were overflowing with the wounded, and many families took care of the men in their homes. Sixteen-year-old Liberty Hollinger

took on the daily responsibility of cleaning and dressing the wound of a man whose arm had been amputated at the shoulder.

While adults tried to spare children the grimmest sights, it was impossible to shield them from the carnage. Walking the fields about a week after the battle, Liberty found hands and feet sticking out of the shallow graves. As she recounted, "To conceal skeletons from view I would collect army coats lying about and place them over the bones." Another teenaged girl, Tillie Pierce, summed up the feelings of many young residents of Gettysburg as they surveyed the destruction left in the wake of battle: "The whole landscape had been changed, and I felt as though we were in a strange and blighted land."

The Civil War sent shock waves through the worlds of both northern and southern children, leaving them with a sense of vulnerability similar to that of earthquake victims. The Civil War tore apart families as well as a nation, leaving those who grew up in the midst of this profound domestic crisis with feelings of confusion and loss that would take the rest of their lives to sort out.

While the trauma of war scarred an entire generation of American youth, for one group of children, those who were born into slavery, the Civil War brought the unanticipated joy of emancipation. Sam Mitchell was a young slave living near Beaufort, South Carolina, in

November 1861 when the United States Navy appeared off the coast of the Sea Islands. He told an interviewer years later, "I t'ought it been t'under rolling, but dey ain't no cloud. My mother say, 'son, dat ain't no t'under, dat Yankee come to gib you Freedom.' I been so glad, I jump up and down and run."

As it turned out, the death of slavery in the South came only after three and a half more years of bloody struggle. Painful as it was, the ordeal resulted in a "new birth of freedom" for young and old alike. Maybe our own children will complete the task of building a just society, finally creating a sense of family in our nation that transcends the arbitrary lines of race.

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*Peter Bardaglio is the Elizabeth Conolly Todd Associate Professor of History at Goucher College. He has published extensively on the nineteenth-century South and the Civil War. Bardaglio holds a PhD in history from Stanford University.*



# Mercy Amidst the Mischief and Misery

## The True Story of Civil War Medicine

By Burton K. Kummerow

The Civil War began as a ninety day adventure. During 1861, thousands of young, eager recruits flocked to Washington and Richmond. A Massachusetts private, writing from Washington and filled with war fever, exclaimed "Mother, these are exciting days! I can hardly contain my enthusiasm to kill some rebels!" On the opposing side, South Carolina Senator James Chestnut — in one of the most ridiculous pieces of political rhetoric in American history — declared that the Yankees were cowards and promised to drink every drop of Southern blood spilled in the upcoming war.

The boy-faced ferocity of these raw recruits was captured by the new-fangled science of photography. Today, we can only wonder at their naiveté as the faces of a lost generation stare back at us over time. All too soon their eagerness to fight for dimly understood political principles would fade away into a four-year nightmare in which every soldier faced a one-in-seven chance of dying.

On June 16, 1864, President Abraham Lincoln visited a Philadelphia fair raising funds for the troops. Running for reelection, the President described his situation as "piled high with difficulties." Thirteen days earlier, General Ulysses Grant had attacked Confederate trenches at Cold Harbor, Virginia, losing 10,000 men in twenty minutes. In just one month, Grant had lost half of his 100,000 man army. With no end to the

bloodshed in sight, President Lincoln's remarks at the fair created a haunting image for future generations: "[The War] has carried mourning to almost every home, until it can almost be said that the heavens are hung in black."

There is a measured inscrutability about the Civil War's terror and trauma, but there are also strong witnesses to its human toll. Poet Walt Whitman, a nurse in Washington hospitals for over two years, called it "the real war, the hospital part of the drama, the marrow of the tragedy concentrated in those army hospitals." Another Civil War nurse, Clara Barton, described the fighting as "the mischief and the misery that the armies strew in their tracks."

On September 17, 1862, the two armies collided near Sharpsburg, Maryland on the war's 520th day. The Old Line State's piece of the "Irrepressible Conflict," was arguably the bloodiest of the war. In twelve hours, 23,000 young Americans, were killed and maimed. Nineteen year old Sgt. Ashbel Hill of the 6th Pennsylvania Reserves met his bullet in the Miller Cornfield, losing his leg and his chance for a full and productive life. Bright and articulate, Sgt. Hill still speaks to us across six generations: "Ye who sleep on beds of down, . . . ye who are free from pain, from hunger, from danger — how little ye know, how little imagine, of the misery that reigns in our far-off hospitals!"

Civil War soldiers wrote millions of letters and diaries that give us vivid insights into the reality of war. A million photographs, stark black and white time machines, provide unprecedented access to the "mischief and the misery." In 1862, seventy-five photographs of the rotting dead at Antietam were put on public display in New York City. A horrified reporter wrote that the grim images brought "home the terrible . . . earnestness of war."

Fifteen hundred days of terror and trauma snuffed out 620,000 lives. For every one who fell in battle, two more died of disease. Yet in the midst of calamity, there was uncommon care and compassion. Tens of thousands, military and civilian, brought mercy to the camps and battlefields. President Lincoln called them "the better angels of our nature." As they stepped up to face the horror of the fighting, they created "a watershed in the history of medicine."

Civil War medicine is both misrepresented and misunderstood. By all accounts, the first year of the war was a medical disaster. An "ancient and fossilized Medical Department . . . proved . . . utterly inadequate to the immense army suddenly assembled." Inexperienced and often incompetent surgeons came with the recruits, while disease killed thousands in unsanitary camps.

When the fighting escalated in 1862, the medical community slowly came to grips with the enormous challenges. The Union



*Doctor's instruments located at Antietam Battlefield. Courtesy of the Herald-Mail Co. Photo by Kevin Gilbert.*

Army treated 6.5 million cases of disease. The much maligned practice of amputating shattered limbs saved countless lives. Pioneering and skillful surgery was performed under appalling conditions. The universal use of anesthesia on both sides greatly reduced the suffering and made new breakthroughs possible. By war's end, the Medical Department was well organized, efficient and looking toward the future rather than the past.

There are limits to this much neglected success story. Doctors were blindfolded. They had not yet discovered the cause of disease and infection and were often helpless in the face of epidemics. They had no knowledge of antisepsis and spread

infection from patient to patient. They used drugs, good and bad, indiscriminately.

The paradox of Civil War medicine is well illustrated by the case of Carleton Burgan. A Union soldier from Maryland, he contracted pneumonia in 1862 and was treated with "Blue Mass," an old fashioned mercury-based drug that was ineffective and even harmful. The drug attacked Pvt. Burgan's soft tissue and ate away much of the right side of his face. Having almost killed their hapless patient, doctors sent him to Dr. Gurdon Buck, one of the fathers of reconstructive surgery. Dr. Buck, in six groundbreaking operations, reconstructed

the private's face. Burgan went on to an almost normal life and his well documented case is one of the triumphs of Civil War surgery.

With scientific medicine still in its infancy, many of the Civil War innovations were organizational and administrative. There were only a handful of military hospital beds available in 1861. By 1865, the number stood at well over 100,000 and the "pavilion" style hospital, created in the emergency, remained the standard for 75 years. For the first time, armies used railroads and steamboats to move troops quickly into battle. After the slaughter, the same transportation removed the human wreckage to hospital centers often hundreds of miles away. Faced with severe shortages of trained personnel, army doctors begrudgingly began to accept women into hospital wards. Thousands answered the call and the nursing profession was born.

So much of the war's medical story revolves around unsung heroes who met emergencies with skill and determination. In 1862, army surgeon Jonathan Letterman inherited a dispirited medical department attached to the Union Army of the Potomac. Working day and night through some of the worst battles of the war, he successfully organized a system of triage and evacuation that is still used by today's armed forces. Letterman's plan for a professional ambulance corps was adopted by Congress in 1864.





*Smith's barn, located near Keedysville, MD, was used as a hospital following the battle of Antietam in September 1862. Courtesy of the Library of Congress. Photo by Alexander Gardner.*

In the South, doctors like J. J. Chisolm and Sam Stout kept critical drugs and medical care available as the Confederacy collapsed around them. Hospital matrons Phoebe Yates Pember and Kate Cumming somehow managed to maintain high standards even as mangled bodies threatened to overwhelm their facilities.

Nowhere is the war's impact more evident than at the homefront. The abiding symbol for hearth and home was the "vacant chair," a reminder of an absent loved one — perhaps a father or brother — buried in a forgotten cemetery near the battle lines. In the midst of this overwhelming sense of tragedy and loss, civilian organizations mobilized to help the soldiers in every way possible. They rolled bandages and knitted socks. They sent bibles and care packages. They forced the armies to clean up their camps and feed soldiers a better diet. They volunteered in the hospitals to comfort the sick and wounded. They raised millions for relief and created the American philanthropic movement in the process.

Ultimately, the story of mercy amid the mischief and misery is uplifting and inspiring. S. Weir Mitchell, one of the Civil War's great doctors, summed up the story fifty years after the firing stopped: "We served faithfully as great a cause as earth has known; we had built novel

hospitals, organized an ambulance service as had never before been seen, contributed numberless essays on disease and wounds, and passed again into private life the unremembered, unrewarded servants of duty."

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*Burton Kummerow is a historian and a member of various museum and cultural professional organizations. He is the former Executive Director of the National Museum of Civil War Medicine in Frederick as well as the Historic St. Mary's City Commission. Mr. Kummerow holds a MA in classical history from the University of Maryland.*



*Dr. Anson Hurd, 14<sup>th</sup> Indiana Volunteers, attends to the Confederate wounded at Smith's Barn. Courtesy of the Library of Congress. Photo by Alexander Gardner (1821–82).*





*Bodies of Confederate dead gathered for burial at Antietam. Courtesy of the Library of Congress. Photo by Alexander Gardner.*

*[The War] has carried mourning to almost every home, until it can almost be said that the heavens are hung in black.*

Abraham Lincoln

## Clara Barton

### Angel of the Battlefield

Clara Barton began her professional life as a school teacher, but she earned her place in history as the founder of the American branch of the Red Cross and as one of the world's most famous nurses. During her nursing career, Barton attended the sick and wounded on Civil War battlefields and took care of those injured and in need of relief as the result of disasters.

At the battle of Antietam, Barton's work consisted of dispensing soup and water and comforting wounded and dying soldiers. She arrived at Antietam the morning of the

battle and worked out of the Samuel Poffenberger farm (which still stands on Monument Road). Her untiring efforts caused brigade surgeon James L. Dunn of Pennsylvania to call her "the angel of the battlefield."

Barton's home in Glen Echo, Maryland, has been designated a national historic site. The house served as the first permanent headquarters of the American Red Cross which Barton founded in 1881. Further information on the Clara Barton House National Historic Site can be found on page 25 of this magazine.



*Photo courtesy of the National Archives.*

# "What I Saw of Antietam"\*

## The Historian as Civil War Reënactor

By Robert I. Cottom

One day last summer I received a phone call from my cousin Ed, a veteran reënactor, who informed me that I had been mustered into Durrell's Independent Battery D, Pennsylvania Volunteer Artillery. This happy event occurred in time for the 135th anniversary of the Battle of Antietam. I had been following reënactments for a number of years and had noted two things: they were getting bigger, and the "acting" was improving with each performance. How many, I asked, were expected to show up? Ed could barely contain his glee. Didn't know exactly. They were coming from all over. Thirteen thousand . . . fifteen thousand. It would be big.

To this day no one knows how many reënactors showed up on a farm just south of Hagerstown one weekend last September but the "official" estimate is seventeen thousand, about as many men as Stonewall Jackson had in his famed Valley Campaign. Lenin took over Russia with fewer people. Obviously we are witness to a groundswell of Civil War buffdom. What in the name of popular culture is going on?

Disguised in a superb reproduction woolen Union artillery shell jacket with red piping, blue wool trousers with braces, a cotton shirt, combat boots, and a forage cap, I infiltrated the movement, and let me tell you dear readers, what I learned about reënactors.

*\*With apologies to Ambrose Bierce, whose eyewitness account of Shiloh puts latter-day efforts at realism to shame.*

Most of the sneering things you have heard about them are true. They are accommodating on the larger issues. They don't use real bullets; they do use portable toilets. They drink. The Union infantry had a party Friday night that resounded for miles. They are defiantly incorrect politically, and the crazier among them would return to 1862 in a New York minute. They are also very nervous lest you get the wrong impression about them.

Their first concern, the rest of us would call it an obsession, is authenticity. My boots, though they easily could be scuffed and muddied, raised eyebrows. Real reënactors wear brogans that slip on grass but *are* period-correct. Same with eyeglasses. In fact reënactors spend a small fortune on clothes and equipment—belts, extra shirts, haversacks, rifles, etc., all to achieve authenticity. But authenticity does not stop with appearances. They want to *experience* Civil War life.

On Friday afternoon we arrived at the campsite. The battery had brought in their two-man tents by truck and had them aligned with a bale of straw for each. Ed and I put up our tent, spread out the straw, placed a gum blanket and our blankets on top of that and went off to register a mile or so away. We rode back with some spectators on a haywagon, stopped off at the "Sutler's Village" for a home-brewed sarsaparilla, and returned to the battery. It was getting toward six, the time reënactors long for, "when

the spectators leave and we have the camp to ourselves." The experience was about to begin.

Friday night — in camp. Mark Pflum, who had paid for the casting of his cannon and construction of his carriage, and who was consequently the lieutenant of Durrell's Independent Battery D, greets his guests, takes roll, and announces that there will be one company meal — tomorrow. Tonight, eat what you brought with you. Everybody shares. Ed and I break out what we brought with us — smoked bologna, trail mix, apples — and pass it around.

Next order of business — guard duty. Evidently part of the reënacting experience is needless suffering, which indicates that when it comes to recreating army life reënactors indeed know what they are doing. Guarding the cannon is understandable—they are expensive, and people have been known to horse around or even steal the powder charges. Standing guard outside a commander's tent is another matter. Someone else volunteers for it. Ed and I take the two-to-four shift on the gun line.

A little before two, I wake by instinct — there are no alarms — rouse Ed, and we head out. It is a beautiful night, the moon bright and clear, the air chilly. A few men are still up around their campfires talking fondly and nostalgically of home — testy wives, can't-figure kids, crummy jobs. At the far end is a tent with a fire in front of it. A man rises in his blankets and pokes the fire until it blazes angrily. With





*Troops line up for battle at the September 1997 Antietam reënactment. Courtesy of The Herald Mail Co.  
Photo by Yvette May.*

nothing else in sight to suggest the year, it might easily have been 1862. By four-thirty our relief has not appeared. We return to our tent and sleep.

Saturday morning. The first disappointment. Durrell's Battery along with several other units is not invited to participate in the Grand Review, a slight not to be passed off easily. Only the best-looking, most authentic units, are invited. Durrell's is new and not high enough in the hierarchy. How well a unit looks and performs in the scripted scenarios, determines its roles when those scenarios are scripted. Some outfits marching by draw appreciative, knowing nods from other reënactors. These guys have it right—the National Regiment, the Iron Brigade. Others have to keep trying. Accompanying hierarchies is jealousy, a general sense that their unit is getting shafted and that some commander is an undeserving knobhead with the right political connections. Much like the real army.

Saturday afternoon. The first scenario. Inverting the sequence of events at the real battle, we begin with A. P. Hill's last-minute assault to hold the Confederate line against Burnside's frustrated Federals who are advancing on Sharpsburg after finally crossing his infernal bridge. The guns are placed first, and we go over the script. The artillery will exchange fire with Confederate batteries across a small valley. Union infantry will go in, driving back a thin Confederate line, then be surprised and driven back themselves by A. P. Hill's men just up from Harpers Ferry.

But first the opposing forces have to take the field. From a road out of their wooded encampment, the Confederate infantry emerges, four abreast, swinging jauntily across our front and out into the arena. More infantry follows in a procession that seems to take half an hour. Some among us mutter in awe at their sheer numbers. The mind naturally asks, if this were

real, we are so few, they are so many, what if? Then the Union infantry comes on. Thousands of them, four abreast. It is reassuring.

At last the troops are in place. Across the valley Confederate cannon open up, and exquisitely timed ground charges explode in front of and among the first line of Union guns. The crowd roars approval. Kids mutter "awesome!" Reënactors grin at one another as if to say somebody is really doing something right and hey, this is fun. The script plays out. Our gun together with the reserve rushes in to try to stem the Confederate wave. The last of the Union infantry goes in but it is not enough. Confederates flank around us, getting between the spectators and our cannon. We cannot fire at them. "They always do that," a gunner groans. "They never follow the goddamned script."

Late in the afternoon, after the gun has been hauled back by pickup truck and the limber has been





*Soldiers on horseback clash during the cavalry demonstration at the Antietam reënactment. Courtesy of The Herald Mail Co. Photo by Richard T. Meagher.*

pulled back by ourselves, Durrell's Battery gathers around the campfire and sets about the company meal. Someone has brought potatoes, someone else cabbage, onions, carrots, and smoked meat. It all goes into two large fry pans filled with water over an open fire. Period-incorrect cigarettes emerge. Tired legs and sore feet remind of middle age. Conversation turns to — books among other things. The stew is surprisingly good but we're too tired to be really hungry. Too soon darkness comes, and with it the chill. We've taken off our sweat-soaked jackets and laid them across the tents to dry, but they don't. We put them back on wet.

About eight-thirty we get a surprise visit from some Georgia infantry passing through and greeting old friends. A bottle of applejack comes out. Lots of joking. The Georgians move on. Ed and I crawl off to our tent and fall quickly asleep to the sound of artillery horses a few yards away. Tomorrow, we do the Cornfield.

Sunday morning. Well before dawn the camp begins to stir. Blanket-draped forms poke at campfires and try to heat pots of pathetically weak coffee. It is still dark when the artillery forms up and marches to the site of the battle. Our guns have already been placed near the edge of a field of standing corn donated by a generous farmer. Down one side runs a worm fence and a rutted road representing the Hagerstown Pike. We march past bleachers filled with several hundred early-rising spectators. Ground fog fills the low-lying dells. The air is sweet with the smell of farm country in late summer.

Our position is on the right of the Union line. Gunners take their positions. I am assigned as "limber corporal," behind the limber, where the ammunition is handed out. I have little to do but watch, and the view is perfect. Before me is the gun crew, beyond them the Cornfield.

At approximately 6:15, with the first gray light, the Confederates open fire: a loud thud and a

pinkish orange flame aimed directly at us. More thuds and pink flame. Lt. Pflum bellows an order. The gunner calls for a charge: "Load!" This is what they live for. It's like being inside a movie with no director but everyone doing the right things. The charge is carried forward, inspected by the gunner, taken to the muzzle, rammed home. A primer is inserted in the breach, all in seconds. We will fire from the right in sequence. Blasts roll down the line toward us. Durrell's gun makes a sharp, nasty bang. Another charge forward. Another wham.

We can no longer see the spectators or even the corn. We are covered in fog and smoke. The firing goes on. Behind us shadowy forms march back and forth in a field of waist-high soybeans. Suddenly they emerge and stand an arm's length away. Dark figures in high crowned hats, rifles held at the right shoulder shift, upright. Young faces. Men and women. They look like kids next to the older artillerymen. This is the Iron Brigade. A leathery-faced officer, lean as a whippet in his frock coat and looking like a Midwestern preacher, berates them and orders them to do their duty.

The artillery ceases fire and the gunners stand "inside the hubs." An officer shouts and the infantry advances through us. We wave our caps to cheer them on, and then they disappear into the mist and the corn. We can hear only their fifer playing a cheerful, doomed ditty. I ask what the music is. A young gunner shrugs. "It's an infantry thing."

We listen intently, knowing what will happen. There is rebel infantry in the corn. Jackson's Corps. The inevitable volley comes, crashing into the faces of the Iron Brigade. Another line of infantry forms behind us and marches through the guns, then another. The sun is up now but appears blood red in the smoke. With our vision obscured, we can no longer fire without the real danger of hurting someone. In the next gun crew, an artilleryman is suddenly bloodied when two primers in his pouch go off in his hand. A concerned Lt. Pflum decides we will not use the new primers but the older ones because they are safer. We share what we have.

The infantry fight is still raging in the Cornfield, but the sun is rising and the smoke around us lifting. We can hear the Union infantry falling back toward us and the sound of firing moving around to our left. Way around to our left. They're not following the script again. At the far left of our line six Union guns swing around to meet the now visible threat, a line of advancing rebel infantry. Six fiery blasts across their path. A grizzled old sergeant nods approvingly. "That's the only thing that'll stop those boys. Six feet of flame." The Confederates withdraw, and a reënactor on a splendid black horse and sharp equipment rides back and forth behind us, congratulating us for holding the field. He is General McClellan, and like the real one, an empty anticlimax.

With the smoke and fog, the Cornfield must have disappointed spectators but it has been a stagger-

ing success for reënactors. As the firing dies out and the smoke lifts, most of the corn has been trampled flat. Soldiers are grinning. "If I died today I'd die a happy man," one says, and probably means it. Most agree. For those looking for the real thing, there were about twenty seconds early on as the Iron Brigade went in, when it was pretty close to 1862. Pretty close.

Back in camp we make flapjacks on a griddle and drink that terrible, weak coffee. There is still another scenario to do, the Sunken Road, but we are too worn out to really look forward to it. The crowd of spectators is somewhere around forty or fifty thousand and the Sunken Road is a compact action that not all will be able to see. Durrell's Battery will therefore be part of a made-up action in which artillery advances to hold off Confederate infantry in one part of the field, while "Bloody Lane" is fought in another. It will start about two. Half the battery sprawls out in its tents and goes to sleep.



*A Confederate reënactor in the heat of battle. Courtesy of The Herald Mail Co.  
Photo by Richard T. Meagher.*

When the last action starts, it quickly becomes interminable. We're all tired but the physical demands are about to peak. Several crews, ours included, have to race our guns downhill, turn them in line, unlimber, and manhandle them up the next rocky hill to push back a Confederate line.

At one-thirty we enter the field in some sort of pageant march that quickly becomes embarrassing when our imperfect drill leaves us fifty yards or so from where we ought to be. No one knows how to correct the situation without saying "Fall out and go over there." Still, the crowd doesn't mind, and when the action begins it comes off pretty well.

Thankfully, Lt. Pflum, who refrained from actual physical work and remained buttoned throughout — accurately representing officers everywhere — lets us remove our heavy jackets in the eighty-degree heat. Before we go out, women in costume dispense lots of ice to put under caps, inside shirts, or simply to eat.



We race downhill, turn the gun, unlimber, and start up. It is hard but lots of fun. The gun weighs 1,800 pounds and we really have to lean into it, striking picturesque stances in mid-struggle, watching other crews do the same thing, and generally reveling in how real we must look. We go into action on the run — firing, advancing, firing, advancing. Once in awhile the Confederates go down in rows when we let off a blast, but our men do not fall as we should. Frankly, my feet and knees hurt so much I fear being unable to get up. Off to our left, Bloody Lane rages, but spectators watching our part of the field are not shortchanged.

After too long, it is over. Not that we can leave yet. We require some sort of ritual congratulations and pseudo-military style dismissal. Lt. Pflum has seen lots of room for improvement, which he largely keeps to himself. At last we gather our gear and head for home, barely awake. It will take three days before my feet stop hurting and I fully recover from exertion and dehydration. It will be a few more days

before I learn that there was a real death in the Cornfield, a forty-eight-year-old Confederate infantryman from Connecticut. In the smoke, we never saw the ambulance rush in to try to save him.

What can we say about reënactors? They are not historians and they know it, but they do read a lot and they spend an inordinate amount of time at their craft. Behind the battles are hours of meetings, preparation, and drill. They are also conscientious, responsible, and have an excellent safety record. That they are overwhelmingly white and male should not be held against them. They have accepted women into their ranks, not just in women's costume, and they will accept black units if they choose to participate although probably with some caveats. Black troops were not recruited until 1863 and would have been inaccurate at Antietam.

To dismiss reënactors as grown men playing with guns is also intellectual snobbery. When seventeen thousand men and women get together to do anything it is worth

a look, and their performance art, at Antietam and other sites, is, if not perfect, nonetheless at times spectacular for those who know what to look for. The Cornfield was one of those times, and there will be others. This group isn't going away. Predictions are that there may be enough men at Gettysburg this summer to reënact Pickett's Charge *to scale*.

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*Robert I. Cottom, editor of the Maryland Historical Magazine, has been production editor of Maryland Humanities since June 1993. He is the publications director of the Maryland Historical Society and the owner of Publishing Concepts, a regional press that features history, commentary, and fiction. Dr. Cottom received an AB in history from Lafayette College and a PhD from the Johns Hopkins University with a speciality in nineteenth-century American history. He is the co-author of Maryland in the Civil War: A House Divided.*

## On the Web

If you enjoyed the photographs that accompanied this article, or if you would like to learn more about the 135<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reënactment of the Battle of Antietam, you will want to check out the Civil War site hosted by The Herald-Mail Co. in cooperation with the Association for the Preservation of Civil War Sites. In addition to a terrific collection of photographs taken at the reënactment, you will find articles about Antietam reprinted from the Hagerstown *Herald Mail*, historic photographs, a calendar of events, links to other Civil War Sites, and much more.

Web address: <http://www.antietam.com>



# Humanities in Maryland

## From the Resource Center

The following videotapes may be borrowed from the Maryland Humanities Council's Resource Center. For further information call Polly Weber at 410-625-4830.

### A Region Divided

Contemplates the role Maryland played as a state on the edge of the Mason Dixon line during the Civil War. (Videotape, 1989)

### Maryland in the Civil War

Examines Maryland's role in the Civil War, including the creation of Black regiments, the Battle of Antietam, the Underground Railroad, John Brown's raid, women at war and at home, and music inspired by the war. (Videotape, 1990)

### Long Shadows: The Legacy of the Civil War

Looks at the ways that this war profoundly affected our nation. (Videotape, 1987)

### Free at Last

Gives voice to dramatic narratives recounting life during the Civil War era just after Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation. (Audiotape, 1994)

## Money Available

Nonprofit organizations and community groups are eligible to apply for grants from the Maryland Humanities Council. Staff members will help you plan programs and work on grant applications. To receive a copy of our grant guidelines, call or write the Council (address and phone number on back cover) or retrieve them from the Council's homepage located at <http://www.gcnet.net/mhc>.

There are two kinds of grants. Minigrants (requests of \$1,200 or less) should be submitted at least six weeks before your project begins; there are no set deadlines for minigrants. Regular grants should be submitted by the following deadlines for consider in the next round:

First Draft	Final Draft	Decision Date
June 15, 1998	July 31, 1998	September 19, 1998
October 15, 1998	November 30, 1998	January 23, 1999

## Maryland Humanities Council Board

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Discussion leader Romaine Chase-Bobbitt enjoys the lively presentation at Cherrydale by Donna Lee Banks.

## Family Matters Concludes Spring Programs

*Family Matters*, the Maryland Humanities Council's innovative reading/discussion program for youth and their adult family partners, has just completed its fifth series. This spring's programs took place in Cherrydale, Gilmore Homes, Medfield PAL Center, and O'Donnell Heights.

The Maryland Humanities Council extends its thanks to the many people who made this program a success including: Griot Donna Lee Banks; illustrator Floyd Cooper; discussion leaders Romaine Chase-Bobbitt, Ann Marie Davis, Monalisa DeGross, and Juanita Miller; and site coordinators Peter Abiamiri, Wilma Coleman, William Dewgard, Glenda Lee, and Cleoda Walker.

We would also like to thank the following staff members with our collaborating partners: Carla Hayden, James Wellbourne, Deborah D. Taylor, Shirley Johnson, Monalisa DeGross, and Juanita Miller from the Enoch Pratt Free Library; and Thelma Millard, Harriet Johnson, Carla Gardner, and Reyma Woodford from the Housing Authority of Baltimore City.

*Family Matters* is made possible through the support of the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Enterprise Foundation. For further information about *Family Matters* contact Belva Scott, 410-625-4830.

### Suggested Readings

The following are some of the books read by different groups during our *Family Matters* programs. Your family might enjoy sharing these books with each other as well.

*Good Books, Good Times!*, selected by Lee Bennett Hopkins (illustrated by Harvey Stevenson)

*Ma Dear's Aprons*, Patricia C. McKissack

*Grandfather's Journey*, Allen Say

*Chato's Kitchen*, Gary Soto (illustrated by Susan Guevara)

*Mississippi Mud – Three Prairie Journals*, Ann Turner (illustrations by Robert J. Blake)

*Miz Berlin Walks*, Jane Yolen (illustrated by Floyd Cooper)

*Books fall open, you fall in  
delighted where you've never been . . .*

*David McCord  
from Good Books, Good Times!*

# Maryland Bookshelf

## New Releases

*Pillar of Fire: America in the King Years, 1963-65*, Taylor Branch

*Rafael Palmeiro: At Home With the Baltimore Orioles*, Ed Brandt

*The Instant of Knowing*, Josephine Jacobs

*Gardens and Gardening in the Chesapeake 1700-1805*, Barbara Wells Sarudy

*A Patchwork Planet*, Anne Tyler

*Builders of Annapolis: Politics and Enterprise in a Colonial Capital*, Norman K. Risjord

## Civil War

*Sabres & Pistols: The Civil War Career of Col. Harry Gilmore, CSA*, Timothy R. Ackincklose

*Grant's Canal: The Union's Attempt to Bypass Vicksburg*, David F. Bastian

*Families and Freedom: A Documentary History of African-American Kinship in the Civil War Era*, Ira Berlin and Leslie S. Rowland, editors

*Maryland, the South's First Casualty*, Bart Rhett Talbert

*The Civil War Supply Catalogue: A Comprehensive Sourcebook of Products From the Civil War Era Available Today*, Alan Wellikoff

*The Flight of the Shadow Drummer*, Paul J. Travers

## Military History

*Easier Said — Tuskegee Airman, Educator, Jazz Musician, The Autobiography of LeRoy A. Battle*, LeRoy A. Battle

*Strike Able-Peter: The Stranding and Salvage of the U.S.S. Missouri*, John Butler

*Fighter Wing: A Guided Tour of an Air Force Combat Wing, Marine: A Guided Tour of a Marine Expeditionary Unit, and Submarine*, Tom Clancy

*Infantry Warfare in the Early 14th Century*, Kelly DeVries

*The United States Naval Academy: A Pictorial Celebration of 150 Years*, Gale Gibson

*When the Stars Went to War: Hollywood and World War II*, Roy Hoopes

*Vietnam Shadows: The War, Its Ghosts and Its Legacy*, Arnold R. Issacs

*Lone Wolf: The Life and Death of U-Boat Ace Werner Henke*, Timothy P. Mulligan

*Fort McHenry*, Scott Sheads

*Korea: Frozen Hell on Earth*, Boris R. Spiroff

*Battleship Missouri*, Paul Stillwell

*Fascist Eagle: Italy's Air Marshal Italo Balbo*, Blaine Taylor

## Maryland

*Olmsted's Sudbrook: The Making of a Community*, Melanie Anson

*Marylanders Who Served the Nation: A Biographical Dictionary of Federal Officials from Maryland*, Gerson G. Eisenberg

*Way Back When in Sudbrook Park*, Beryl Frank

*Annapolis Pasts: Historical Archaeology in Annapolis, MD*, Paul A. Shackel, Paul R. Mullins, and Mark W. Warner, editors.

*An Architectural History of Harford County, Maryland*, Christopher Weeks

*Leaning Sycamores: Natural Worlds of the Upper Potomac*, Jack Wennerstrom

*Baltimore: Industrial Gateway on the Chesapeake*, Dennis M. Zembala



and Robert Vogel, editors

*Maryland*, Esther Wanning

## History

*The Language of Sex: Five Voices From Northern France Around 1800*, John Baldwin

*Reconstructing the Household: Families, Sex and the Law in the 19th Century South*, Peter Bardaglio

*Provincial Families of the Renaissance: Private and Public Life in the Veneto*, James S. Grubb

*Broken Drum*, Edith Morris Hemingway and Jacqueline Cosgrove Shields

*Killing Kennedy, and the Hoax of the Century*, Harrison Livingston

*Making a Social Body: British Cultural Formation, 1830-1864*, Mary Poovey

*Jericho: Dreams, Ruins, Phantoms*, Robert Ruby

*Invisible America: Unearthing Our Hidden History*, Leone and Neil Silberman

*The Nightingale's Song*, Robert Timberg

*Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, Michel-Rolph Trouillot

*What Was Socialism, and What Comes Next?*, Katherine Verdery



# ARTSCAPE 98

The Maryland Humanities Council is pleased once again to join with the Baltimore's Festival of the Arts in presenting a celebration of the Literary Arts at ARTSCAPE '98. ARTSCAPE will take place the weekend July 17-19. For further information about the

Literary Arts programming, or about the rest of the festival, call Baltimore's Festival of the Arts at 410-396-4575 or visit the ARTSCAPE website, <http://www.artscape.org>.

## Free Speakers!

During 1998, the Maryland Humanities Council is presenting its second series of *Speakers Bureau* programs throughout the state. Outstanding humanities scholars are available for presentations, without charge, to civic and community groups in Maryland. The Council pays for the scholar's honorarium and travel expenses — all the sponsoring organization must do is provide a space and an audience. For more information about the *Speakers Bureau* contact Polly Weber, 410-625-4830.

## Free Reading/Discussion Programs!

The Maryland Humanities Council is sponsoring a series of free reading/discussion programs for local libraries, senior centers, and community groups throughout our state. Series themes include *Voices and Visions* (American poetry), *Families*, and *Democracy in America*. A scholar selected by the Council will present background information on the authors and their works and lead a discussion about issues raised in the reading. The Council will pay for the scholar's honorarium and travel expenses and supply the books and tapes to be discussed. The host organization is responsible for publicizing and conducting the program and for returning the books to the Council so that others may use them. For further information, contact Margitta Golladay, 410-625-4830.

## Council Seeks Applications For Board Membership

The Maryland Humanities Council welcomes applications for possible vacancies on its Board of Directors. The Council is composed of up to twenty-six volunteer members drawn from academy and community, representing all regions of the state. Council members contribute hundreds of unpaid hours reading and reviewing applications for funding, attending funded projects, and assisting in fundraising efforts.

Applications are invited from residents throughout Maryland who by reason of their achievement, scholarship, and creativity in the humanities, or their knowledge of community and state interests are qualified to serve. Interested citizens should submit their resume, with a cover letter explaining their reasons for wishing to serve on the Council (address on back cover).

## Did You Know ...

... that you are one of 16,000 homes and businesses that receive *Maryland Humanities*? Did you also know that you receive *Maryland Humanities* free of charge? We have never charged any subscription fees for our magazine, and we hope that we never have to charge any. But the cost of producing and mailing *Maryland Humanities* continues to increase, so we hope that you will consider making a donation to the Council. Please mail your contribution to: Maryland Humanities Council, 601 North Howard Street, Baltimore, MD 21201-4585.



Pat Smith heads up a fife and drum corps in the Confederate line at the 1997 Antietam reenactment. Photo by Kevin C. Gilbert. Courtesy of The Herald Mail Co.

## On The Web

We hope you have enjoyed the articles about the Civil War presented in this issue of *Maryland Humanities* and that they have whet your appetite for further explorations. As a starting point, you might want to visit these sites on the Internet. Once you are online, don't forget to visit the Maryland Humanities Council's homepage located at <http://www.gcnet.net/mhc>.

### The US Civil War Center

<http://www.cwe.lsu.edu/civlink.htm>

### United States Civil War 1861-1865

<http://www.cfcsc.dnd.ca/links/millhist/usciv.html>

Both of these homepages offer hundreds of links to other Civil War sites on the Internet: biographies, units and battles, reenactors, programs and events, photographs, diaries, genealogies, museums, historic sites and memorials, etc. If you are looking for something about the Civil War on the web, these are good places to start.

### The Mining Company

<http://americanhistory.miningco.com>

The Mining Company's American History website has many interesting links, including one for the Civil War. That link, in turn, leads to many others including "The Civil War in Miniature," a website that follows the course of the entire war, providing along the way interesting tidbits and factoids, terms and definitions, short stories, photos, animation and music.

### Valley of the Shadow: Living the Civil War in Pennsylvania and Virginia

<http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/vshadow/vshadow.html>

This homepage springs from a research project examining the history of two communities on either side of the Mason Dixon line during the Civil War era. It combines narrative with links to an electronic archive of the sources used for the research.



*A cavalry orderly at Antietam, Maryland, October 1862. Photo by Alexander Gardner (1821-82). Courtesy of the Library of Congress.*

## Sharpsburg Heritage Festival

Mark your calendars for September 17-20, 1998 when the Sharpsburg Heritage Festival will be held. This small town sits at the center of Antietam, the best-preserved Civil War battlefield in the nation. Sponsored in part by a grant from the Maryland Humanities Council, the Sharpsburg Heritage Festival will feature concerts of Civil War music, lectures, dramatic presentations, living history programs, and guided tours of Sharpsburg's historic buildings and byways.

Festival visitors, including many descendants of those who fought in the Civil War, will be made honorary citizens the afternoon of Sunday, September 20 in a ceremony complete with citizenship papers. A concert by the U.S. Marine Corps. Band follows.

Other events will be taking place at Antietam in conjunction with the 136<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Antietam. On the weekend of September 12-13, special ranger led hikes will travel unmarked paths across the Antietam National Battlefield. Each hike will cover in detail a specific phase at the time and place it actually happened. An anniversary ceremony will be held at 6 p.m. on Thursday, September 17 on the battlefield near the Dunker Church. At 7 p.m. that evening, a special lecture will be given at the park's Visitor Center.

For more information about the Sharpsburg Heritage Festival and Antietam National Battlefield call 1-800-228-STAY.





## *Chautauqua '98* AMERICAN HUMORISTS

Chautauqua is a tent show. Tents are magnetic, nostalgic, almost magical. A tent breathes above its audience. It heaves and sighs atop its wooden poles, alive almost, tethered to the ground but yearning to take wing.

Chautauqua is a deeply serious program, but it is couched in the trappings of playfulness, theater, even circus. Chautauquans come to town to talk with citizens of all ages, to share with them their ideas and insights. But they also come to listen, to hear what people think and what they care about.

Chautauquans are not tourists, but scholars in residence; not actors, but students of the past with their feet firmly planted in the present. They are eager to launch their tent upon the winds.

—Clay S. Jenkinson

The Maryland Humanities Council invites you to share the magic of a tent show with us. All Chautauqua programs are free and open to the public. All program sites are handicapped accessible; if you need sign language interpretation to enjoy our programs, please call Chautauqua coordinator Donna Leigh Boulter 703-960-5368 by Monday, June 29, 1998 so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

## Chautauqua Tent Performances

All Chautauqua tent performances are held under the big top at Garrett Community College, McHenry, MD and begin promptly at 7 PM. Local entertainment precedes the appearance of our Chautauquans who appear in costume (and character!), talking about their lives and answering our audiences' questions.

Sunday, July 5	Gil Filsinger followed by <i>An Evening with Mark Twain</i>
Monday, July 6	Marsh Mountain Consort followed by <i>An Evening with James Thurber</i>
Tuesday, July 7	Eleanor Benedict followed by <i>An Evening with Dorothy Parker</i>
Wednesday, July 8	Tom and Susan Peterson followed by <i>An Evening with Langston Hughes</i>
Thursday, July 9	Gil Filsinger Group followed by <i>An Evening with Will Rogers</i>



# Chautauqua Workshops

In addition to the performances in our main tent, our Chautauquans will conduct a number of workshops in the local area. Some of the programs are designed for children and/or families (C); the rest are intended for adults (A).

## Sunday, July 5

- 2 PM            *Good Advice for Boys and Girls: Stories from Tom Sawyer* (C)  
Auditorium, Garrett Community College, Mosser Road, McHenry  
Scholar: George Frein (appearing as Mark Twain)

## Monday, July 6

- 10 AM           *Edit and Write a Humorous Newspaper* (C)  
Room 257, Garrett Community College, Mosser Road, McHenry  
Scholar: Anne Bail Howard
- 1:30 PM        *Women's Humor in American History and Culture* (A)  
Art Gallery, Garrett Community College, Mosser Road, McHenry  
Scholar: Anne Bail Howard

## Tuesday, July 7

- 10 AM           *Thurber's Stories For Children* (C)  
Art Gallery, Garrett Community College, Mosser Road, McHenry  
Scholar: Carrol Peterson (appearing as James Thurber)
- 1:30 PM        *Thurber's Cartoons and Drawings* (A)  
Studio Theater, Frostburg State University, Frostburg  
Scholar: Carrol Peterson

## Wednesday, July 8

- 11 AM           *Will Rogers: Cowboy Philosopher* (A)  
Mary Browning Senior Center, 104 Center Street, Oakland  
Scholar: Douglas Watson
- 1:30 PM        *What a Cowboy's Life Was Really Like: Real Cowboys vs. Movie Cowboys* (C)  
Oakland Branch Ruth Enlow Library, 6 North Second Street, Oakland  
Scholar: Douglas Watson

## Thursday, July 9

- 11 AM           *Art and Politics in the Poetry of Langston Hughes* (A)  
Grantsville Senior Center, 125 Durst Court, Grantsville  
Scholar: Charles Everett Pace
- 1:30 PM        *The Ending of The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (A)  
Accident Branch, Ruth Endlow Library, 106 South North Street, Accident  
Scholar: George Frein

*Chautauqua '98 – American Humorists is sponsored by the Maryland Humanities Council  
in association with Garrett Community College and Garrett Lakes Art Festival*

## Calendar of Humanities Events

The following programs are receiving funds from the Maryland Humanities Council. Council grants are made possible through major support from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Maryland's Division of Cultural and Historical Programs, corporations, foundations, and individuals. Since dates and times are subject to change, we recommend you contact the project director before attending any event.

### Exhibits

Through  
April 1999

#### **Something Extra: Traditional Decorative Carvings on Chesapeake Bay Work Boats**

Examines the important role decorative boat carvings have played in the lives of the watermen who use them and the craftsmen who created them.

Location: Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, St. Michael's  
Contact: *Peter Leshner, 410-745-2916*  
Sponsor: Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum

Through  
February 2000

#### **Colonial Capitals of the Chesapeake: Jamestown and St. Mary's City**

Traces the evolution of seventeenth-century St. Mary's City and Jamestown, revealing their similarities and differences, and assessing the impact of political, economic, and social forces of the day.

Location: Historic St. Mary's City Visitor Center, St. Mary's City  
Contact: *Sila Hurry, 301-862-0960*  
Sponsor: Historic St. Mary's City Foundation

Permanent

#### **Sotterley's Interpretive Walking Trail**

Explores three centuries of Maryland Tidewater history found at Sotterley Plantation in Southern Maryland on an interpretive trail highlighting the grounds, outbuildings, slave cabin, and manor house.

Location: Sotterley Plantation, Hollywood  
Contact: *Judith O'Brien, 301-373-2280*  
Sponsor: Sotterley Foundation

### Programs

June 11 &  
July 9  
7:30 PM

#### **Maryland History Educational Programs of Friends of HAF**

Explore topics such as historic architecture in Annapolis and St. Michael's and the history of the Whitbread race at this monthly lecture series.

Location: William Paca House and Garden, Annapolis  
Contact: *Katie Michaelson, 410-263-5553*  
Sponsor: Historic Annapolis Foundation, Inc.

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| <p>June 13<br/>1:30 PM</p> | <p><b>The Lost Towns of Anne Arundel Archaeology Project</b></p> <p>Enjoy an illustrated talk by Dr. James Gibb describing how an archaeology team uses conventional techniques and state-of-the-art electronic technologies to discover and piece together bits of Maryland's past.</p> <p>Location: Whatcoat Methodist Church, Snow Hill<br/> Contact: Bob Fisher, 410-632-1265<br/> Sponsor: Maryland Humanities Council</p> | <p>July 22<br/>10:30 PM</p> | <p><b>Post-Show Discussion Series</b></p> <p>Join with scholars, actors, and community representatives to discuss the historical and literary themes in the plays presented by the Olney Theater during its 1997-98 season.</p> <p>Location: Olney Theatre Center for the Arts, Olney<br/> Contact: Melissa Collins, 301-924-4485 x113<br/> Sponsor: Olney Theatre Center for the Arts</p> |
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| <p>June 29 &amp;<br/>July 3</p> | <p><b>African Americans in Business: The Path Towards Empowerment</b></p> <p>Focuses on the 1998 Black History theme <i>African Americans in Business: The Path Towards Empowerment</i>. High school teachers will attend lectures by historians, discuss how to use the Black History Month resource kit in the classroom, and tour the <i>Afro-American</i> to learn how to use it as a research tool.</p> <p>Location: Coppin State College, Baltimore<br/> Contact: Larry Martin, 410-265-6043<br/> Sponsor: Coppin State College</p> | <p>Through<br/>November<br/>1998</p> | <p><b>Musings of Two Shores: Songs and Poetry of Spain and Latin America</b></p> <p>Explore the rich cultural traditions of Spain and Latin America through poetry readings accompanied by guitar and song. The poetry is recited in Spanish; narration about the poems is given in English. Eight programs will take place at sites throughout Maryland.</p> <p>Location: Call sponsor for details.<br/> Contact: Soriano Santome, 410-256-2797<br/> Sponsor: The Hispanic Cultural Association of Maryland</p> |
|---------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|--|
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# Maryland Revisited

By 1888 a new generation had begun, but echoes of the Civil War could still be found in the simple play of children. In the photograph at right, the boys and girls at *Oakdale* are shown forming their own line of light infantry. *Oakdale*, an estate owned by the Warfield family, was located in Glenelg, Howard County. The other photographs, taken on the property a year later, show the children enjoying the more pastoral pastimes of seesaw and shooting marbles.



*All photographs courtesy of the Maryland Historical Society.*

# Maryland's Best Kept Humanities Secrets

## Civil War Museums and Sites in Maryland

The following listing provides a selection of Civil War museums and sites in the State of Maryland. We hope it will serve as a launching point for further explorations into the Civil War in Maryland. We recommend that you contact the sites before your visit to confirm hours and admission rates, as well as to obtain information on special events and travel directions. Where available, Internet addresses have been provided.



### Antietam National Battlefield

Route 65, Sharpsburg  
301-432-5124  
[www.nps.gov/anti/](http://www.nps.gov/anti/)

#### Hours:

Open daily except for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day  
8:30 AM – 6 PM (summer), 8:30 AM – 5 PM (winter)

#### Admission:

Adults \$2, Families \$4, no charge for children 16 and under

*On this site General Robert E. Lee's first invasion of the North ended in September 1862. More than 23,000 men were killed, wounded, or listed as missing following the Battle of Antietam, the bloodiest day of the Civil War.*

### B & O Railroad Station Museum

2711 Maryland Avenue, Ellicott City  
410-461-1944  
[www.\\_rcf.usc.edu/~gkorna/bando.html](http://www._rcf.usc.edu/~gkorna/bando.html)

#### Hours:

Call for current hours

#### Admission:

Adults \$3, Seniors \$2, Children (12 and under) \$1

*The oldest railroad station in America has been restored to its appearance during the Civil War. A living history program, The Civil War: A Local History, runs from May through September. The program features the Patapsco Guard, a recreation of the local militia company, and the Patapsco Citizens, a group of individuals who portray the local civilian population.*

### Baltimore Civil War Museum

Corner President and Fleet Streets, Baltimore  
410-385-5188  
[www.civilwarinbaltimore.org](http://www.civilwarinbaltimore.org)

#### Hours:

Open Tuesday–Sunday except for Thanksgiving and Christmas.  
10 AM – 5 PM

#### Admission:

Adults \$2, Children (4–17 years of age) \$1, no charge for children 4 and under

*Located in historic President Street Station, the museum tells the stories of Baltimore's roles in the Underground Railroad and in the Civil War including the Pratt Street Riot.*

### Clara Barton House National Historic Site

5801 Oxford Road, Glen Echo  
301-492-6245  
[www.nps.gov/glec/geclba.htm](http://www.nps.gov/glec/geclba.htm)

#### Hours:

Open daily except for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day  
10 AM – 5 PM

#### Admission:

Free

*Clara Barton, the "angel of the battlefield," made her final home in this grand structure situated in Glen Echo park. The house also served as the first permanent headquarters of the American Red Cross, which Miss Barton founded in 1881.*

## Barbara Fritchie House and Museum

154 West Patrick Street, Frederick  
301-698-0630

### Hours:

April through September: Monday, Thursday–  
Saturday, 10 AM – 4 PM  
October and November: Saturday, 10 AM – 4 PM;  
Sunday, 1 – 4 PM  
Closed December through March

### Admission:

Adults \$2, Seniors \$1.50, Children (6–11) \$1.50, no  
charge for children under 6

*As Stonewall Jackson and his troops were leaving Frederick  
on September 10, 1862, 95-year-old Barbara Fritchie  
earned her place as an American heroine when she shouted  
“Shoot if you must this old grey head.” The museum is not  
the original Fritchie home; however, many parts of the  
original structure were used in this replica and many of  
Fritchie’s personal belongings are on display.*

## Harpers Ferry

One mile west of the Shenandoah River Bridge just  
off U.S. Route 340, Harpers Ferry, WV  
304-535-6298  
[www.nps.gov/hafe/hf\\_info.htm](http://www.nps.gov/hafe/hf_info.htm)

### Hours:

Open daily except Christmas  
Visitors Center: 8 AM – 5 PM

### Admission:

\$5 per vehicle, \$3 per person (cyclists and walk-ins)

The Lower Town Historic District sits on the point of  
land where the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers  
converge. It was here that John Brown led his ill-  
fated raid of October 16–18, 1859. Maryland Heights  
mountain hides the ruins of once extensive Civil War  
fortifications, infantry trenches, artillery redoubts,  
and ammunition pits.

## Maryland Historical Society

201 West Monument Street, Baltimore  
410-685-3750  
[www.mdhs.org/mdhs.html](http://www.mdhs.org/mdhs.html)

### Hours:

Tuesday–Friday, 10 AM – 5 PM  
Saturday, 9 AM – 5 PM  
Sunday, 1 PM – 5 PM  
Closed Mondays and major holidays.

### Admission:

Adults \$4, Seniors \$3, Students \$3, Children (12–17) \$3  
Family rate: \$6 for 2 adults and 2 children  
Free admission on Saturdays, 9 – 11 AM

*Among its many holdings, the museum has an outstanding  
collection of Civil War artifacts from both the Confederate  
and Union armies.*

## Monocacy National Battlefield

4801 Urbanna Pike, Frederick  
301-662-3515  
[www.nps.gov/mono/mo\\_visit.htm](http://www.nps.gov/mono/mo_visit.htm)

### Hours:

Wednesday – Sunday, 8 AM – 4:30 PM  
Closed Mondays and Tuesdays, Thanksgiving, Christ-  
mas, and New Year’s Day  
The park is open year round, the visitor center is open  
Memorial Day through Labor Day

*On July 9, 1864 Union forces delayed Jubal Early’s advance  
on Washington, DC at this battlefield situated in Frederick  
County.*

## Dr. Samuel A. Mudd House

Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Road, LaPlata  
301-645-6870  
[www.somd.lib.md.us/museums/mudd.htm](http://www.somd.lib.md.us/museums/mudd.htm)

### Hours:

First weekend in April through late November  
Wednesdays, 11 AM – 3 PM; Saturday and Sunday,  
Noon – 4 PM

### Admission:

Adults \$3, Children (6–16) \$1

*“St. Catherine on the Zechia” was the home and planta-  
tion of Dr. Samuel Mudd, who set the leg of John Wilkes  
Booth, assassin of President Abraham Lincoln. For  
rendering his professional services, Dr. Mudd was sent to  
Fort Jefferson Prison on Dry Tortugas Island, Florida. He  
was given a life sentence, but was pardoned by President  
Andrew Johnson in 1869.*



## National Museum of Civil War Medicine

48 East Patrick Street, Frederick  
301-695-1864  
civilwarmed.org

### Hours:

Monday – Saturday, 10 AM – 5 PM

Sunday, 11 AM – 5 PM

Mid-November to Mid-March, open to 4 PM; call for holiday hours

### Admission:

Adults \$2.50, Seniors \$2, Children (10–16) \$1, no charge for children under 10

*The museum seeks to explore the personal stories of devotion and courage among military and civilian heroes and to discuss the war's importance in the history of medicine and the development of modern medical practices. Exhibits look at the army in camp, the army in battle, the role of the home front and caring for the sick and wounded.*

## Point Lookout State Park

Scotland  
301-872-5688

### Hours:

Park open daily, 6 AM – sunset

Museum open daily from Memorial Day through Labor Day and weekends during the months of April, May, September, and October. Call for hours.

*The Point Lookout Civil War Museum documents local Civil War history, highlighting the Union hospital and Union prisoner-of-war camp.*

## Surratt House Museum

9118 Brandywine Road, Clinton  
301-868-1121

[www.glue.umd.edu/~clwspoon/surratt.html](http://www.glue.umd.edu/~clwspoon/surratt.html)

### Hours:

March 1 – mid-December (except Easter and July 4<sup>th</sup>)

Thursdays and Fridays, 11 AM – 3 PM

Saturdays and Sundays, Noon – 4 PM

### Admission:

Adults \$3; Seniors \$2; Children (5–18) \$1

*The Surratt House Museum presents a variety of programs and events that recapture the history of mid-19th-century life, and focus on the fascinating web of the Lincoln conspiracy.*



## Union Mills Homestead

3311 Littlestown Pike, Westminster  
410-848-2288

[www.carr.lib.md.us/carroll/recreati/unmhist.htm](http://www.carr.lib.md.us/carroll/recreati/unmhist.htm)

### Hours:

Open June through August

Tuesday – Friday, 10 AM – 4 PM

Saturday and Sunday, Noon – 4 PM

Also open weekends during May, September, and October

*The 1797 historic Shriver family estate was used as a stopover for Civil War soldiers, including J. E. B. Stuart's Confederate cavalry and Sykes's Fifth Corps of the Army of the Potomac.*

## Washington County Civil War Sites

Washington County  
[www.civilwarsites.com](http://www.civilwarsites.com)

*Information regarding civil war sites in Washington County can be found on the Civil War Crossroads homepage.*

# An Interview with Donna Leigh Boulter

By Barbara Wells Sarudy

*Donna Leigh Boulter is the managing editor of Maryland Humanities magazine and coordinator for the Council's Chautauqua. She has held a number of jobs during her ten years with the Council, including Public Affairs Assistant and Administrative Director. Donna received her BS in business administration from Towson University. She was previously employed by two economic development corporations, Oyster Point Development Corporation, Newport News, VA and York Road Area Planning Committee, Baltimore; she also worked in commercial real estate and public relations. She is active in the Boy Scouts of America as a leader and trainer.*

*Donna leaves the Council this summer to relocate to Virginia with her new husband, Doug Boulter.*

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*How has the work of the Council changed over the years?*

I remember my first staff retreat; I made the tremendous *faux pas* of saying how incredibly boring I thought *Maryland Humanities* magazine was. Little did I know that the Council considered the magazine its jewel in the crown. How ironic that ultimately I would be named managing editor and charged with changing some of the very things I had objected to earlier. I think the magazine has a new tone and look that makes it more interesting to our readers — at least I certainly hope so! Also, when I started ten years ago, the Council produced a humanities conference every other year but our primary function was to give away grants. We still have our grant program, but we also produce our own

speakers bureau, reading/discussion and family reading programs, and the Chautauqua. It's a lot more work for the staff, but in many ways it's more satisfying than simply handing out money and letting other people do the work.

*What good does it do to fund humanities programs with public monies?*

The good it does is that for a minimal investment of dollars, we are able to provide humanities programs to a wide range of people in the state of Maryland — including those folks who might not be able to attend classes at a large university or visit an exhibit at a museum in the metro area. John Adams once wrote, "I must study politics and war that my sons may have liberty to study mathematics and philosophy. My sons ought to study mathematics and philosophy, geography, natural history, naval architecture, navigation, commerce, and agriculture, in order to give their children a right to study painting, poetry, music, architecture, statuary, tapestry, and porcelain." The cost in terms of public monies to insure that more Americans will have an opportunity to study and appreciate the arts and humanities is small compared to other things funded with taxpayer dollars.

I recall the time we had an author-in-residence program with Gloria Naylor. She spoke one evening at a community college and a student who was wandering down the hall decided to stop in "for just a minute" before heading home. Well, she stayed for the entire lecture and bought a copy of *The*



Donna Leigh Boulter

*Women of Brewster Place* and stood in line to have it autographed. While she made her purchase, the student explained that she was dyslexic and would have trouble reading the book. But she was determined to do so because she had been so excited listening to Gloria Naylor. To me, that's the payoff in funding humanities programs.

*Who is the most memorable person you have met in your years here?*

When I began work for the Council, one of the first things I noticed in the newsletters of the other state councils was that this Clay Jenkinson person was appearing as Thomas Jefferson in humanities programs all over the place. I started a Clay Jenkinson montage on my wall and launched a personal campaign to bring him to Maryland. That took nearly eight years, but finally I was able to bring Clay here for our Chautauqua. Clay is one of the most unique scholars I have ever met. He mesmerizes his audiences with his portrayal of Jefferson and his ability to answer endless questions about the third president. When the trappings of theater were thrown away in his workshop



appearance, our audience was just as fascinated by Jenkinson the Jeffersonian scholar. On a personal level, Clay is the original Peck's Bad Boy — impish and charming and tremendously funny.

*Which is your favorite Maryland humanities literary character?*

I like H. L. Mencken a great deal. There's a man who didn't have much in the way of formal education, yet he became the master of non-fiction prose in just about every form. The integrity and courage of his journalism are as renown as his reputation as a curmudgeon. And I love his scathing wit. It's hard not to admire someone who wrote, "Puritanism: The haunting fear that someone, somewhere, may be happy."

On the other hand, since last year I have developed an overwhelming fondness for Edgar Allan Poe. Actually, I suppose Poe has always held a certain charm for me, as he does for most people. I was very much into horror fiction in my youth — I still am, for that matter. I remember reading *The Cask of Amontillado* in high school and really taking a fancy to it. Last year when we asked Doug Boulter to develop Poe as a Chautauqua character I got to know a lot more about Doug and, by extension, his new alter ego Mr. Poe. I fell in love with Doug (we were married in June) and while I can't say my devotion to Mr. Poe extends quite that far, he's certainly become a significant part of both of our lives.

Poe is a brilliantly tragic character. In one of his poems Poe wrote, "From childhood's hour I have not been/as others were — I have not

seen/as others saw." In many ways that's true. Poe is one of the best short story writers of all time and the creator of detective fiction. He was the leading literary critic of his time. He prided himself on his poetry, the writing of which he described as a "hobby." However, his personal life tended toward disaster; he simply couldn't resist doing absolutely the wrong thing. The title of one of his stories neatly described this tendency — *The Imp of the Perverse*. I can certainly identify with that!

*What is the funniest moment?*

Well, there are so many that it is hard to narrow it down to just one. Margitta (Golladay) and I love to pull pranks and in the years we've been here, we've managed to rope the rest of the staff into joining in the fun. Frankly, if you don't have a sense of humor, you're not going to be very happy working in an office as small as ours.

I guess one of the funniest things I remember is when our former assistant director, Elinor Sklar, broke her ankle. That she got hurt wasn't the least bit funny. But Elinor would never tell anyone how old she was and heavens knows we were always trying to find out. When the paramedics arrived to take her to the hospital, one of them had to write down her personal information and finally he got around to asking her age. We all leaned real close and the office got very quiet. But she whispered her response into his ear, so we never did find out!

*The most embarrassing?*

I know there have been a wealth of embarrassing moments, but having

endured the original humiliation of their passing I don't know that I'm inclined to share them with 15,000 readers! But I'll give you one that shouldn't prove too traumatic. When Clay was here, Margitta and Polly (Weber) drove him to a workshop and en route he asked a multitude of questions about Maryland to which they drew a total blank. I didn't fare much better when the questions were repeated to me, but I tried to draw some meager comfort from the fact that I was reared on the history of Virginia, not Maryland. To the utter chagrin of us all, we came back from Deep Creek Lake to find a fax from Clay answering his own questions — in exacting detail.

*What have the humanities taught you about your own life?*

That all lives are important, that we all add something to the history pages of human existence. I was most reminded of that when I attended *Coal Talk*, an oral history project that received Council funding. Most of the people interviewed didn't think their lives had been very important. Yet they had so much to share about the history of coal mining and of western Maryland. Hearing about labor unions from Anton Durbas ... watching a former miner take over as docent at an abandoned mine to explain how a piece of equipment had been used ... looking at lovingly preserved lunch pails, lanterns, and receipts from a company store ... all of those things drove home the point that the seemingly trivial can make a significant contribution to the greater whole.





Progress might have been all right  
once, but it's gone on too long.

Ogden Nash

*Hmmm, maybe Ogden's right. Perhaps we should all take a step back in time and relive a few moments when there wasn't quite so much progress. One way to do that is to spend July 5–9 at Deep Creek Lake in western Maryland and attend the Council's Chautauqua '98 American Humorists (see pages 20–21). These living history programs and workshops are a great way to learn more about our nation's literary past . . . and to share a laugh or two.*

*If you just can't fit a trip to the mountains into your summer vacation plans, all is not lost. The next issue of Maryland Humanities will feature articles on humorists Mark Twain, James Thurber, Dorothy Parker, Langston Hughes, and Will Rogers. See you then!*

Maryland  
**HUMANITIES**

Maryland Humanities Council  
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Baltimore, MD 21201-4585  
(410) 625-4830

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# HUMANITIES



*Chautauqua '98*  
AMERICAN HUMORISTS

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# To Our Readers

This year marks the fourth season for our Chautauqua in western Maryland. At the turn of the century, an annual summer *Mountain Chautauqua* flourished in Garrett County. The Maryland Humanities Council is delighted to continue bringing what Theodore Roosevelt dubbed "the most American thing about America" back to the Free State.

What is a Chautauqua? Taking its name from a lake in New York State, Chautauqua (shuh-taw-kwa) began in 1874 as a training course for Sunday School teachers. Then in 1878, Chautauqua extended its philosophy of adult education to include an appreciation for the arts and humanities. By 1904, Chautauqua took to the road as a part of the Lyceum movement, bringing lecturers and entertainers to towns across America. By the end of the Roaring Twenties, Chautauquas were a thing of the past. Reborn as a humanities program in 1976, today's Chautauquas feature scholars who take on the persona of celebrated historical figures, educating and entertaining audiences as they bring the past to life again.

The theme for our 1998 Chautauqua was American Humorists and featured appearances by Will Rogers, Mark Twain, Dorothy Parker, James Thurber, and Langston Hughes. For those of you unable to join us for a most memorable week at Deep Creek Lake, we present this issue of *Maryland Humanities*.

The Maryland Humanities Council wants to thank the following individuals for their help in making *American Humorists* a reality.

## The National Chautauqua Tour Troupe

George Frein (Mark Twain)  
Anne Bail Howard (Dorothy Parker)  
Charles Everett Pace (Langston Hughes)  
Carrol Peterson (James Thurber)  
Doug Watson (Will Rogers)

## Garrett Community College

Stephen J. Herman, President  
Terry Norris, Chautauqua Site Coordinator  
Joan Crawford and Fred Stemple, Steering Committee

I would personally like to thank Donna Leigh Boulter, who leaves the Council this summer, for her fine work as Chautauqua coördinator for the past three years.

We also wish to thank Columbia Gas of Maryland and the National Endowment for the Humanities for major financial support for this project. Thanks as well to the Garrett County Arts Council, the Maryland State Arts Council, and Frostburg State University for their additional support.

*Barbara Wells Sarudy*  
*Executive Director*



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## Maryland HUMANITIES

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# Mark Twain

## Not A Humorist of the Mere Sort

By George Frein



*Samuel Clemens, better known as Mark Twain. Photo courtesy of Corbis-Bettmann.*

The survival of Mark Twain's humor for almost 90 years after his death is evidence that he was not a mere humorist. What was he then?

Twain was a preacher-humorist; a moralist-humorist; a critic-humorist. He was a lecturer, a writer, a philosopher, and a scholar. All of these aspects of his life and mind enriched and deepened his humor, making it the significant force it has been in American culture for more than a hundred years.

When he wrote his autobiography, Twain said he was happy to have lasted for thirty years. He started his career as a professional humorist, he said, in the company of "seventy-eight other American humorists," all of whom were gone. "Why have they perished?" he asked. "Because they were merely humorists. Humorists of the mere sort cannot survive."

A humorist is not like a novelist, he argued: "There are those who say a novel should be a work of art solely

and you must not preach in it, you must not teach in it. That may be true as regards novels but it is not true as regards humor. Humor must not professedly teach and it must not professedly preach, but it must do both if it would live forever. By forever, I mean thirty years . . . I have always preached. That is the reason I have lasted thirty years."

Early in his career Mark Twain was often content simply to entertain, and throughout his life his sense of humor would soar in flights of pure genius and wit all for its own sake. Like all humorists, Twain liked to make people laugh. Merely to amuse his listeners and readers was often his only purpose.

But, it was also early in his career that Twain began to equate being a humorist with a calling to preach. He wrote to his brother, Orion: "I have a call to literature of a low order — namely humorous literature. . . . It is a poor, pitiful business but it is my calling."

It is not likely that Twain really thought of his calling as a pitiful business, for he immediately began to compare it to that of the preacher. He wrote that it was his vocation to "excite laughter in God's creatures" and to be "the week-day preacher" (as opposed to the "Sunday preachers"). In *Huckleberry Finn*, Huck comments about Silas Phelps, the farmer who was holding the runaway slave, Jim, for the reward: "he was a preacher . . . and never charged nothing for his preaching, and it was worth it, too."

The chief fault of Sunday preachers, at least as Twain knew them in his youth, was their defense of

slavery. He wrote in his autobiography: "In my schooldays, I had no aversion to slavery. I was not aware that there was anything wrong about it. No one arraigned it in my hearing; the local papers said nothing against it; the local pulpit taught us that God approved it, that it was a holy thing."

*Huckleberry Finn* is Mark Twain's anti-slavery, anti-racist classic. It is a compelling attack on race prejudice. At the center of the novel is Twain's assault on church-formed conscience. After Huck has helped Jim run away and come close to gaining his freedom, the boy has a conversation with his troubled conscience. Huck's conscience talks to him in true preacher fashion, telling him that he will go to hell for what he is doing. Huck's heart contradicts his conscience, sounding like a sermon by Mark Twain. After listening to his heart, Huck tears up the letter he had written, notifying Miss Watson of Jim's whereabouts, saying, "All right, then, I'll go to hell."

Huck's encounter with his conscience leads him to this conclusion: "A person's conscience ain't got no sense. . . . Why if I had a yallar dog that didn't know no more than a person's conscience does, I'd pison him." Twain's own critical view of a conscience trained by Sunday preachers uses *Huckleberry Finn* as evidence: "I myself believe in the proposition that in a crucial moral emergency, a sound heart is a safer guide than an ill-trained conscience. I should support this doctrine from a book of mine where a sound heart and a

deformed conscience come into collision and conscience suffers defeat."

*Huckleberry Finn* was even more of an attack on Gilded Age racism than it was on the Sunday morning preaching that supported slavery. After all, when the book was published in 1885, slavery had been abolished for more than 20 years. Slavery was gone but racial prejudice and oppression was not. The plight of black Americans during the Gilded Age was, in most ways, worse than during slavery. The country knew no more what to do with the free negro than Twain's Tom Sawyer did. Tom knew that Jim had already been freed in Miss Watson's will, but he told no one at the Phelps' farm so that he could use Jim for his own entertainment, staging a romantic, literary escape when none was needed and only demeaned Jim in the process. All of the humor Twain employs in the last part of the novel is ironic and satirical. Here Twain is the humorist-as-social-critic at his best.

Everywhere he turns in the country, even 20 years after emancipation, the black man hears the hateful epithet "nigger." He hears it repeatedly, even from those, like Tom and Huck, who befriend him. The novel begins with an allusion to the book of Exodus and the aim of helping a slave escape; it ends with a long drawn out conclusion, during which the legally free Jim has his hopes disappointed and delayed while white folks fool around. What happens in the novel is exactly what is happening in the country. The humor of the ending catches and condemns Gilded Age

racism as does the repeated use of the epithet "nigger." This is the way you are; this is the way you sound, Twain says to his countrymen, and your laughter convicts you.

*Huckleberry Finn* was not Mark Twain's first humorous criticism of the Gilded Age. His first novel, written in collaboration with his Hartford neighbor Charles Dudley Warner, gave the years after the Civil War their name. *The Gilded Age, A Tale of Today* was, in Twain's words, "a pretty broad satire on politicians, capitalists, and Western land speculators." The spirit of the times was summed up by "a distinguished speculator in lands and mines" who said: "I wasn't worth a cent two years ago, and now I owe two million dollars."

The Gilded Age was a time of dollars and Twain was as frantic as anyone to get them, but it never kept him from criticizing the robber barons and plutocrats. He wrote about one of the most notorious of the robber barons: "Jay Gould was the mightiest disaster which has ever befallen this country. The people had *desired* money before his day, but *he* taught them to fall down and worship it."

Before he wrote *The Gilded Age*, Twain had attacked the conclusion which the wealthy were quick to draw from their riches, namely that their money was a sign of their virtue. Twain did not agree, even when preachers and writers of children's books also came to the same conclusion. Twain rejected the idea that the virtuous prosper and the wicked suffer. He framed his rejection of the idea in a pair of



*Preachers are always pleasant company when they are off duty.*

Mark Twain

short burlesques — “The Story of the Good Little Boy Who Did Not Prosper” (1870) and “The Story of the Bad Little Boy Who Didn’t Come To Grief” (1865). In the case of the bad boy Twain wrote: “And he grew up, and married, and raised a large family, and brained them all with an ax one night, and got wealthy by all manner of cheating and rascality, and now he is the infernalist wickedest scoundrel in his native village, and is universally respected, and belongs to the Legislature.”

The classic bad boy who was not punished for all the trouble and mischief he created was, of course, Tom Sawyer. Mark Twain said *Tom Sawyer* was simply a “hymn to boyhood,” but it was also a realistic work in which Tom was *not* punished for his pranks, including the one in which he gets the whole town to think he and his two companions are drowned so they can have the fun of attending their own funeral and be treated as heroes by the rest of the children in the village. By the end of the book, after a series of exploits that would have brought whole steamboats full of grief in any other children’s book, Twain has Tom and Huck find a fortune of the size Horatio Alger reserved for the best and hardest working of good lads. Twain’s hymn to boyhood, with all the mischief and humor we so much enjoy, is more than it seems. It is about youths who are truer to life than their elders. The novel confirms the advice Twain used to give in his lectures to young people: “Always obey your parents, when they are present. This is the best

policy; because if you don’t they will make you. Most parents think they know better than you do; and you can generally make more by humoring that superstition than by acting on your own better judgment.”

Mark Twain was a critical-minded humorist in *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*, his best known books. He thought that conventional pieties and opinions were wrong-headed and should be laughed out of existence. “Irreverence,” he said, “is the champion of liberty.” And he thought, “Our race has only one really effective weapon and that is laughter.” The simplistic piety about good and evil he mocked in *Tom Sawyer* and the racism he exposed in *Huckleberry Finn* were forms of narrow-mindedness. Most adults forget what real childhood is and most Americans, even the abolitionists, cannot get past their racial prejudice.

What gave Twain’s genius a wider view of things in these books, and in the more than seventy other volumes that make up the huge body of his writing, was that he traveled widely and read even more widely than almost all his countrymen. He piloted steamboats on the Mississippi between St. Louis and New Orleans. He rode the overland stage to Nevada and prospected for silver and gold. He became a reporter for the *Virginia City Territorial Enterprise* before moving to San Francisco. He traveled to Hawaii to write letters for the *Sacramento Union* and came back to lecture, first in San Francisco and then New York. He joined the first American pleasure cruise to travel to

Europe and the Holy Land and concluded that it is good for the “American Vandal” to travel: “It does him good. It rubs out a multitude of old prejudices. It aids his religion. It teaches him there are other people in the world.”

Twain lived for long periods in Europe and when he couldn’t pay his debts he made an around-the-world lecture tour that brought him home a confirmed anti-imperialist: “I bring you the stately matron named Christendom, returning bedraggled, besmirched and dishonored from pirate-raids in Kiao-Chow, Manchuria, South Africa and the Philippines, with her soul full of meanness, her pocket full of boodle, and her mouth full of pious hypocrisies. Give her soap and a towel, but hide the looking glass.”

Mark Twain’s reading was, if anything, more extensive than his traveling. As a very young printer’s apprentice he found that he liked the work because it gave him access to books. He wrote to his mother from New York that he went to the printers’ private library and could “spend my evenings most pleasantly.” After the huge success of his first book, *The Innocents Abroad* and his marriage into a wealthy New York family, Mark Twain began to collect what was to become quite an impressive and well used library.

He read Dickens. He read Oliver Goldsmith and Jane Austen (though of Austen he said, “Every time I read *Pride and Prejudice* I want to dig her up and beat her over the skull with her own shin-bone.”). He read Sir Thomas

Mallory, Jonathan Swift, Sir Walter Scott, Samuel Pepys, and Lord Macaulay. He read the Bible and Shakespeare. He read Cervantes and said: "*Don Quixote* is one of the most exquisite books that was ever written." He read Francois Rabelais and wrote: "If I had lived in the fifteenth century I should have been Rabelais. I know him from top to bottom." He read Poe, Cooper, Hawthorne, Howells, and Henry James, though he told William Dean Howells, "I would rather be damned to John Bunyan's heaven than read *The Bostonians*." He read and admired the philosophy of Thomas Paine. He read Thomas Carlyle's *French Revolution* and then read it again — eight times in all.

He reported on his eighth reading of Carlyle to his friend Howells: "How stunning are the changes which age makes in a man while he sleeps! When I finished Carlyle's *French Revolution* in 1871 I was a Girondin; every time I have read it

since I have read it differently — being influenced and changed, little by little, by life & environment (& Tane & St. Simon); & now I lay the book down once more, & recognize that I am a Sansculotte! — And not a pale, characterless Sansculotte, but a Marat. Carlyle teaches no such gospel, so the change is in me — in my vision of the evidence."

It was Mark Twain's vision of the evidence, obtained by wide travel and reading, that made him a humorist who was also something of a humanities scholar. To be sure, Twain was not an academically trained scholar. He did not even graduate from grammar school. But, he was a scholar nonetheless. "I never let my schooling interfere with my education," he said.

Late in his life, three universities conferred honorary degrees on Mark Twain. The degrees were fitting recognition of his un-

schooled learning. Twain was enormously proud of the degrees, though he treated the honors lightly in his autobiography. "It pleased me beyond measure when Yale made me a Master of Arts, because I didn't know anything about art. . . . I rejoiced again when Missouri University made me a Doctor of Laws, because it was all clear profit, I not knowing anything about laws except how to evade them. ... And now at Oxford I am to be made a Doctor of Letters — all clear profit, because what I don't know about letters would make me a multi-millionaire if I could turn it into cash." Twain took to wearing his Oxford robe over his white suit, thus declaring, in a kind of double affectation, the sort of humorist he was. He was not a mere humorist by along shot. He was a scholar humorist.

## Meet George Frein (Mark Twain)

George Frein is recently retired professor emeritus of philosophy and religion at the University of North Dakota, Grand Forks. He has spent the last 12 summers traveling through Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, and the Dakotas, performing for the Great Plains Chautauqua Society. His characters included Father De Smet, Henry Adams, Herman Melville, and, for the past four years, Mark Twain. Frein is a member of The National Chautauqua Tour, a group of humanities scholars which offers programs of historical characterization to the general public. Frein holds a PhD from the Catholic University of America. He welcomes correspondence from Chautauqua audiences and his e-mail address is: ghfrein@netway.com.



# Timeline: Mark Twain

- 1835 Samuel Langhorne Clemens is born on November 30th in Florida, Missouri to John Marshall and Jane Lampton Clemens.
- 1839 The Clemens family moves to Hannibal, Missouri.
- 1847 John Marshall Clemens dies. Clemens does odd jobs and attends J. D. Dawson's school.
- 1848 Clemens begins to work as a printer's devil (chore boy).
- 1853 Clemens leaves Hannibal to work in St. Louis, New York, and Philadelphia.
- 1857 Having begun to write letters for his brother's paper while working as a typesetter, Clemens goes to New Orleans and becomes a cub pilot under Horace Bixby on the Mississippi.
- 1861 Though now a licensed pilot, Clemens must give it up because of the outbreak of the Civil War. He goes home and joins a band of Confederate irregulars — for two weeks. He goes west with his brother, Orion to the Nevada Territory where he tries his hand at prospecting.
- 1863 Having failed as a silver miner, Clemens begins to write for the *Virginia City Territorial Enterprise*. On February 3, he uses the pseudonym Mark Twain for the first time.
- 1864 Twain becomes a reporter for the *San Francisco Morning Call*.
- 1865 "Jim Smiley and His Jumping Frog," published in the *Saturday Press*, is reprinted widely.
- 1896 Spending five months in Hawaii, Twain writes letters back to the *Sacramento Union*. He gives his first public lecture in San Francisco.
- 1867 Twain goes to New York to lecture. He publishes a book of sketches and sails on the *Quaker City* for Europe and the Holy Land, writing letters for papers back home.
- 1868 Twain meets and begins to court Olivia (Livy) Langdon. He lectures about his travels.
- 1869 Twain turns his travel letters into the wildly successful *The Innocents Abroad*.
- 1870 Twain marries Livy Langdon, moves to Buffalo, and writes humor for the *Galaxy* magazine. A son, Langdon, is born.
- 1872 Having moved to Hartford, Twain publishes his western book, *Roughing It*. A daughter, Susy, is born. Twain lectures in England.
- 1873 Twain publishes his first novel, *The Gilded Age*, with Charles Dudley Warner.
- 1874 A second daughter, Clara, is born to Mark and Livy. The Hartford mansion is built.
- 1876 *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* is published.



- 1880 Twain works on *The Prince and the Pauper* and *Huckleberry Finn*, publishes *A Tramp Abroad*, and has a third daughter, Jean.
- 1883 *Life on the Mississippi* is published.
- 1885 Twain's own publishing company, Webster & Co., publishes *Huckleberry Finn*. The book is banned from the Concord, Massachusetts Library and begins to sell well.
- 1889 *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* is published.
- 1892 Deepening financial troubles force the Clemens family to live in Europe.
- 1894 Twain declares bankruptcy. *Pudd'nhead Wilson* is published.
- 1895 With Livy and Clara, Twain begins an around-the-world lecture tour to help pay off his debts. Susy dies before they return in 1896.
- 1898 The last of Twain's creditors are paid in full. He begins work on *The Mysterious Stranger*.
- 1904 Livy dies in Florence, Italy. Twain begins to dictate his autobiography.
- 1907 Twain is given an honorary Doctor of Letters degree by Oxford University.
- 1910 Mark Twain dies on April 21.



## Mark Twain on the Web

As you explore the Internet, you might want to visit these web sites pertaining to Mark Twain.

**Mining Co. Guide to Mark Twain**  
[marktwain.miningco.com](http://marktwain.miningco.com)

This web site contains links to associations, criticism and reviews, newspaper reports of Twain's life, photo gallery, text copies of books and short stories, online exhibits, teaching resources, Twain impersonators, bulletin board and chat room, and more.

**Mark Twain Quotations**  
[www.tarleton.edu/activities/pages/facultypages/schmidt/Mark\\_Twain.html](http://www.tarleton.edu/activities/pages/facultypages/schmidt/Mark_Twain.html)

Find a quote from Twain on just about everything from achievement to zeal. There are also links to newspaper and magazine articles written by Twain.

**Mark Twain in His Times**  
[etext.virginia.edu/railton/index.html](http://etext.virginia.edu/railton/index.html)

This interpretive archive focuses on how Twain and his works were created and defined, marketed and performed, reviewed and appreciated.

# A Mark Twain Bibliography

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The order and dates of this list are the first American editions of Mark Twain's works. They have been reissued in twenty-nine volumes in *The Oxford Mark Twain* by Oxford University Press, 1996; Shelley Fisher Fishkin, editor.

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*Roughing It*, 1872.

*The Gilded Age*, 1873.

*Sketches, New and Old*, 1875.

*The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, 1876.

*A Tramp Abroad*, 1880.

*The Prince and the Pauper*, 1881.

*Life on the Mississippi*, 1883.

*Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, 1885.

*A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, 1889.

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*How To Tell a Story and Other Essays*, 1897.

*Following the Equator and Anti-imperialist Essays*, 1897, 1901, 1905.

*The Man That Corrupted Hadeleyburg and Other Stories and Essays*, 1900.

*The Diaries of Adam and Eve*, 1904, 1906.

*What Is Man*, 1906.

*The \$30,000 Bequest and Other Stories*, 1906.

*Christian Science*, 1907.

*Chapters from My Autobiography*, 1906, 1907.

*1601, and Is Shakespeare Dead?* 1882, 1909.

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*Mark Twain and the Enterprise: Newspaper Articles & Other Documents, 1862–1864*, ed. Henry Nash Smith and Frederick Anderson, 1957.

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*Letters from the Earth*, ed. Bernard De Voto, 1962.

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*Mark Twain's Notebooks & Journals*, vol. 1: 1855–1873, ed. Frederick Anderson, Michael B. Frank, Kenneth M. Sanderson, 1975.

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*It is better to keep your mouth shut and appear stupid  
than to open it and remove all doubt.*

Mark Twain

# James Thurber

## Finding the Funny Side of Trouble

By Carrol Peterson

To many people James Thurber (1894–1961) is essentially a *New Yorker* writer. The idea could as easily be reversed to say *The New Yorker* is essentially Thurberesque, for Thurber, along with his friend E. B. White did more to establish the tone and style of the magazine than anyone else. Thurber was there in the beginning when editor Harold Ross was still uncertain about the form his struggling new weekly humor magazine should take. Ross was, however, able to recognize what he wanted when he found it, so when White introduced Thurber — a thirty-two year old *New York Evening Post* reporter — Ross hired him. The year was 1927 and the best years of the magazine were just ahead. To be sure, other regular writers for the magazine did much to assure its increasingly consistent high quality: Dorothy Parker, Robert Benchley, Alexander Woollcott, Wolcott Gibbs, Brendan Gill, and others. But the consistency and volume of the work done by Thurber and White in those early years were what firmly established *The New Yorker* as America's highest quality literary magazine.

Thurber's work did have antecedents. He learned from other *New Yorker* writers. For example, he always gave credit to Benchley, and several of Thurber's stories resemble Parker's. E. B. White, an impeccable stylist, helped refine Thurber's sense of the perfect sentence and word. "It is not too much to say," Thurber wrote in 1938, "that Andy White was the most valuable person on the magazine." White also collaborated in Thurber's first



James Thurber. Photo courtesy of Henry Holt & Co. Used with permission of Rosemary Thurber.

clear publishing success, *Is Sex Necessary* (1929), a satire on contemporary psychology.

Of previous American humorists, Thurber is most often compared to Mark Twain. Thurber claimed that he had never read either *Tom Sawyer*

or *Huckleberry Finn*, but like many authors, Thurber wasn't always a thoroughly honest reporter on his own life and it seems likely that he knew Twain better than he admitted. It is remarkable how similar their lives were. Like Twain, Thurber

*[Humorists] lead, as a matter of fact, an existence of jumpiness and apprehension. They sit on the edge of the chair of Literature. In the house of Life they have the feeling that they have never taken off their overcoats.*

## James Thurber

began as a newspaper writer, relied on his mid-American roots for material, and turned to the east coast for culture and for the symbols of success.

Events that formed James Grover Thurber's life, like those that formed the lives of many humorists, were more tragic than funny, but he managed to turn them to good-humored effect. He lost his left eye to a playful brother's toy arrow when he was seven years old, an injury which led eventually to total blindness. (Read "The Admiral on the Wheel" to see how Thurber transformed this tragedy.) Thurber's likable father Charles was a nearly successful — but never quite — political figure in local and national politics. He was frequently unemployed and was never paid well. (Read "Gentleman from Indiana.") Thurber's mother Mame was a very bright but decidedly odd woman given to outrageous practical jokes. Once, for laughs, she pretended to be restored to health from a stolen wheelchair at a faith-healer's meeting. On another occasion, she disguised herself as an eccentric buyer of an acquaintance's unsalable house. (Read "Lavender with a Difference.") The whole family was inept with things mechanical despite the dawning automobile age. (Read "The Car We Had to Push" and "I Break Everything I Touch.") Thurber managed to turn to all of these things to self-effacing humorous effect, but like Mark Twain, he did so with a tragic

awareness. "The proof of humor," said Thurber, "is the ability to put one's self on awkward public Record."

Peculiar people are prevalent in Thurber's humor, and the people he writes about are drawn from realities that are not far distant. Harold Ross (in *The Years with Ross*), many Thurber relatives (such as Aunt Margery Albright in "Daguerreotype of a Lady," Aunt Ida Clemmens in "A Portrait of Aunt Ida," and his immediate childhood family in "The Night the Ghost Got In"), a variety of strong-charactered and singular acquaintances (as in "The Black Magic of Barney Haller" and "A Ride with Olympe") and even the whole town of Columbus ("The Day the Dam Broke") provided a wealth of comic material.

Animals also provided material for Thurber in a quantity unknown to other humorists. There are the cartoon dogs, for which he is famous. But there are also the seal in the bedroom, the rabbit in the analyst's chair, the hippopotamus with Dr. Millmoss's hat, the kangaroo standing as evidence in court, and a host of other cartoon creatures. There are also the animal-based stories found in *Fables for Our Time* and *Further Fables for Our Time*. In a blend of literary and cartoon fancy, Thurber created in "The Pet Department" drawings of funny-looking animals together with comic advice to their owners, and in "A New Natural History"

drawings of such creatures as the Hopeless Quandary, Martinets, and Wedlocks. Gary Larson, creator of the zany "Far Side" cartoon creatures surely owes much to Thurber.

Thurber's comic vision is very near to tragedy. In *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, Mark Twain said that the secret source of humor is "not joy but sorrow." Thurber would agree. In writing about his friend Groucho Marx, Thurber quotes these lines from the song "Fine and Dandy": "Even trouble has its funny side," adding that there is "not only the funny side of trouble, but also the troublesome side of fun." Dorothy Parker noted this in her introduction to Thurber's cartoon book *The Seal in the Bedroom and Other Predicaments* (1932): "No one . . . knows from what dark breeding-ground come [Thurber's] ideas." In an interview with Max Eastman, published in *The Enjoyment of Laughter*, Thurber said:

*The closest thing to humor is tragedy. Humor is a kind of emotional chaos told about calmly and quietly in retrospect. . . . Human dignity, the humorist believes, is not only silly but a little sad. So are dreams and conventions and illusions. The fine brave fragile stuff that men live by. They look so swell and go to pieces so easily.*

Dorothy Parker thought Thurber's cartoon characters could be classified as "the playful, the defeated, and the ferocious . . . all of them have the outer semblance of



unbaked cookies; the women are of a dowdiness so overwhelming that it becomes tremendous style." Parker further saw Thurber's people as "lambs in a world of wolves . . . and there is on them a protracted innocence." The possibilities for tragicomedy in life are plentiful. Of the various possibilities, Thurber was especially tuned to simple human confusion and related victimization. In response—for escape and for revenge on circumstances—his characters often lead a vivid fantasy life. Therein lies the reason soldiers during World War II enjoyed Thurber's famous "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty."

Though he recognizes the tragic element in it, Thurber does not see humor as a grim instrument for recapitulating the catastrophes of life. So-called "sick humor" and "comedy of cruelty" are not his interest. In a 1959 interview with Edward R. Morrow, Thurber carefully distinguishes humor from cruelty:

*By definition, humor is gentle. The savage, the cruel, the harsh would fall under the heading of wit and/or satire, as the lawyers say. Now my definitions of these: the wit makes fun of other persons; the satirist makes fun of the world; the humorist makes fun of himself, but in so doing, he identifies himself with people—that is, people everywhere, not for the purpose of taking them apart, but simply revealing their true nature.*

Though the range of Thurber's writing is wide, and a story like "The Vvmp-Poor-Will" can scarcely be called gentle, Thurber's most characteristic writing is more gentle than bitter.

The last decade of Thurber's life, the 1950s, was not a good period for gentle humor. He speculated that the acerbic satire of Mort Sahl might be the most appropriate thing for "the Age of Suspicion." Senator Joseph McCarthy, the chief witch-hunter of the Red Scare, was one reason Thurber began to wonder if humor could exist in the Fifties: "Senator McCarthy did indeed make it hard for us to tell the difference between the patriotic and the subversive," he said ("The State of Humor in the States"). Thurber could be proud that *The Male Animal*, the play he and Elliott Nugent had written and staged in 1940, was revived in the frightening atmosphere of 1952, and that it was praised for its assertion of the right of free speech. He was amused and a little irate that the play was found "un-American" in at least one California community.

In fact, considering the number of writers called before Congress to prove their patriotism by naming names, Thurber might have been among those summoned. He was certainly vocal in his opposition to the loyalty investigation hearings, as well as in his denunciation of such government acts as the with-

holding of Arthur Miller's travel visa. It has recently been found, through the Freedom of Information Act, that the FBI kept a file on Thurber beginning in 1939—a file that eventually accumulated over one hundred pages of "information." In the Thirties, Thurber had spoken against left-wing communist extremes; now, in the Fifties, he protested the right wing extremes in writings such as "Look Out for the Thing." He also protested by actions such as his refusal of an honorary degree from his alma mater, Ohio State, because the school insisted that all campus speakers be approved by the university president who was required to eliminate any controversial ones.

Another reason it was difficult for Thurber to find grist for his humor mill during his last decade was the Cold War, with its threat of world annihilation through nuclear war. Earlier, at the outset of World War II, he had created the bitter-sweet captioned cartoon series "The Last Flower." That fable suggested that life would survive, if barely, the near-total destruction of war. In the Fifties, however, he wrote, "Yes, Virginia, there is a bomb in Gilead, but don't just take another tranquilizer and walk the other way. Let's face it" ("On the Brink of War"). Neither comedy nor tragedy succeed, however, by a grim facing of a grim reality.

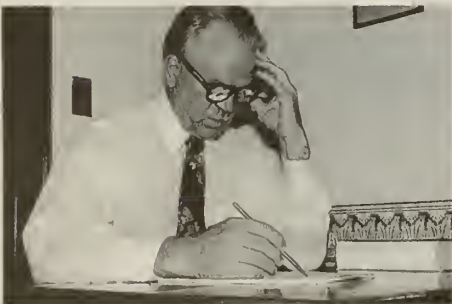
Fortunately, Thurber did not spend all his time facing it. In a better mood he wrote, in a letter to E.B. White, "Every time is a time for humor. . . . I write humor the way a surgeon operates, because it is a livelihood, because I have a great urge to do it, because many interesting challenges are set up, and because I have the hope it may do some good." Despite the grim era and his failing health, Thurber remained active to the end. *The Thurber Carnival* (1945), an anthology of the best of his previously published works, solidified his reputation as America's leading living humorist. He appeared on

television shows, and even acted (a year before his death) in a Broadway revue of his work called *A Thurber Carnival*, receiving a Tony for the writing.

Blind and unable to draw since 1951, Thurber published some impressive writing in the decade before his death. There were the delightful children's books *The Thirteen Clocks* and *The Wonderful O*. There were the five collections (*The Thurber Album*, *Thurber Country*, *Further Fables for Our Time*, *Alarms and Diversions*, and *Lanterns and Lances*) and there was the best-selling autobiographical *The Years with Ross*.

At its best, humor is a serious thing. T. S. Eliot told *Time* magazine this about Thurber's work: "There is a criticism of life at the bottom of it. It is serious and even somber." Life itself is a serious thing and often tragic. Fortunately, Thurber finds a way of dealing with such things in a way that lifts our spirits. Eliot must have had this in mind when he said that Thurber's "writings and also his illustrations are capable of surviving the immediate environment and time out of which they spring." We can indeed be thankful there was a Thurber.

## Meet Carrol Peterson (James Thurber)



Carrol D. Peterson is senior professor of English at Doane College, Crete, Nebraska, where he has taught since 1964. His doctoral dissertation was on the radical political theorist and novelist William Godwin, father of Mary Shelley, father-in-law of the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley. His special study is American and British writers of the past two hundred years. He began his Chautauqua experience in 1989 by presenting Thomas Paine. Since then Peterson has presented Walt Whitman, Jack London, and (most recently) James Thurber.

## Suggested Readings: James Thurber

Reading of James Thurber should begin with *The Thurber Carnival*, which contains much of his best work. From it, be sure to read "The Catbird Seat," "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty," "The Admiral on the Wheel," "A Couple of Hamburgers," "The Night the Bed Fell," "The Car We Had to Push," "The Day the Dam Broke," "The Night the Ghost Got In," and "The Dog That Bit People."

Some fine stories not included in *The Thurber Carnival* can be found in the excellent Library of America's *James Thurber: Writings and Drawings*. Those who have some knowledge of both the French language and the legends of the American Wild West will enjoy "Wild Bird Hickok and His Friends." "The Whip-Poor-Will" is a tragic, even melodramatic tale. "File and Forget" is a hilarious story of misunderstanding by mail. "Daguerreotype of a Lady" and "Lavender with a Difference" give further vivid portraits of the peculiar Thurber family.

Thurber's own view of his *New Yorker* experience, if not entirely accurate, is entertainingly told in *The Years with Ross*. *The Thirteen Clocks* is best read in the fully illustrated version (though the illustrations are not by Thurber) and it should be read by everyone at some time in their life, if only for the language fun in it.

## A Few Thurber Thoughts

*You can fool too many of the people too much of the time.*

*It is better to ask some of the questions than to know all the answers.*

*I love the idea of there being two sexes don't you?*

*I do not have a psychiatrist and I do not want one, for the simple reason that if he listened to me long enough, he might become disturbed.*



# Timeline: James Thurber

- 1894 James Grover Thurber is born on December 8 in Columbus, Ohio.
- 1902 Thurber loses his left eye when his brother William accidentally shoots it with an arrow while they are playing.
- 1913–18 Thurber attends Ohio State University but, in his fifth year, quits to work as a code clerk for the State Department.
- 1919 Thurber is attached to the American Embassy in Paris as code clerk.
- 1920–24 Thurber works as a reporter for the *Columbus Dispatch*. In 1922 he marries Althea Adams.
- 1925 Thurber spends a year in France trying to write a novel.
- 1927 Thurber sells his first piece to *The New Yorker*, meets writer E. B. White and editor Harold Ross, and begins his career with the magazine.
- 1929 With White, Thurber writes and illustrates *Is Sex Necessary?*
- 1931 Thurber's daughter, Rosemary, is born.
- 1932 *The Seal in the Bedroom and Other Predicaments* is published.
- 1933 *My Life and Hard Times* is published.
- 1935 After his divorce from Althea, Thurber marries Helen Wismer. *The Middle-Aged Man on the Flying Trapeze* is published.
- 1937 *Let Your Mind Alone!* is published.
- 1939 "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" and *The Last Flower* are published.
- 1940 The play, *The Male Animal*, written with Elliott Nugent, opens in New York. *Fables For Our Time* and *Famous Poems Illustrated* is published.
- 1941 Thurber has a series of eye operations to no avail. He continues drawing and writing for several years (using a Zeiss loop for a time) making his last drawing in 1951.
- 1942 *My World and Welcome to It* is published.
- 1943 *Many Moons* is published and receives the American Library Award as best children's book.
- 1944 *The Great Quillow*, another children's book, is published.
- 1945 *The Thurber Carnival*, a collection of previous work, confirms Thurber's reputation. *The White Deer*, a children's story, is published.
- 1950 *The Thirteen Clocks*, a children's story, is published.
- 1951 Thurber declines an honorary degree from Ohio State because the school censors speakers.
- 1952 *The Thurber Album* is published.

- 1953 *Thurber Country* is published.
- 1956 *Further Fables for Our Time* is published.
- 1957 *The Wonderful O*, a children's story, and *Alarms and Diversions* are published.
- 1959 *The Years with Ross*, Thurber's version of his *New Yorker* experience, is published.
- 1960 Thurber acts in a sketch in the Broadway revue of his works called *A Thurber Carnival*, later receiving a Tony for his writing of the revue.
- 1961 *Lanterns and Lances* is published. Evidently having had a series of earlier strokes, Thurber dies on November 8 after a brain tumor is removed.

## James Thurber on the Web

As you explore the Internet, you might want to visit these web sites pertaining to James Thurber.

### The Works of James Thurber

[www.seanet.com/~thurber/thurber.html](http://www.seanet.com/~thurber/thurber.html)

This site includes a number of Thurber's short stories and cartoons.

### James Thurber Pathfinder for UNC Chapel Hill

[budgetweb.com/heather/thurber/thurber.html](http://budgetweb.com/heather/thurber/thurber.html)

Find links to biographies, bibliographies, interviews, criticism and reviews, and much more on this homepage.



# Dorothy Parker

## A Disciplined Eye and a Wild Mind

By Anne Bail

She was quoted and misquoted for her biting wit; she was a model of the twenties sophisticate; she was a writer of skillful, terse verse and stylish short stories and sharp criticism — she was Dorothy Parker, brash voice of the famous twenties.

One acquaintance called her a combination of Little Nell and Lady Macbeth. To most American imaginations she remains a big-eyed sprite with bangs, eternally thirty-ish, fading with speak-easies from the public eye. Yet she outlived her closest acquaintances — those stars of wit who frequented the Algonquin Round Table. At seventy she lamented, “I should have started lying about my age years ago, but now it’s too late.”

During her long life she made real contributions to American expression. The carefully crafted short stories she contributed to the *New Yorker* helped establish that publication’s primacy in the field. Her witty verses lightened the tone of popular magazines like *Saturday Evening Post* and *Life*. As a reviewer she responded to contemporary writers for forty years in the *New Yorker* and *Esquire*. Twice in her on-again, off-again movie scripting career she was nominated for an Academy Award. Perhaps because her famous repartee seems so spontaneous, few realized that she was a perfectionist who never met her own high standards. Although critics disagree about her importance as a writer, no fewer than four biographies found audiences between 1978 and 1988.

Born Dorothy Rothschild in 1893, she was educated first at Blessed Sacrament convent and later at Miss Dana’s school in Morristown, New Jersey. Although she claimed she learned nothing at the first one, she flourished at the second, studying Latin and French and reading everything she could get her hands on. Even there, her wit was storied: when a girl asked “Are you my friend?” she retorted, “A girl’s best friend is her mutter.” But her home life was not happy: her mother had died when Dorothy was six and she made of her father’s second wife a true fairy tale step-mother; her father she blamed both for being Jewish and for being rich. “If I ever wrote about my childhood ... you wouldn’t sit in the same room with me.”

Her first publication in *Vanity Fair* brought her a job at *Vogue* (“brevity is the soul of lingerie, as the Petticoat said to the chemise”) and she was soon working as a reviewer. She married Edwin Pond Parker, a Connecticut blueblood, seeing him off to war almost immediately, but faithfully visiting him each weekend until he went overseas.

At *Vanity Fair* Robert Benchley and Robert Sherwood had joined the staff, and created the unholy trio that was to form the center of the Algonquin Round Table — a rowdy, competitive magnet for the literary and the would-be-celebrated actors, writers, and journalists. A second trio of wits just back from the war — Alexander Woollcott, Franklin P. Adams, and Harold Ross (later editor of the *New Yorker*) — met for

lunch and wisecracks (Parker would later call them “smart-crackers”) in the hotel dining room, gathering kindred spirits for inexpensive lunches. Adams recorded their best remarks in his popular newspaper column and helped make Dorothy Parker famous.

Jokes about each other, sharp anecdotes dependent on the word play of puns and double entendres, and criticisms of plays and books fed the intellectual appetites of the ever expanding group of lunchers. All added sharpness to the Parker style. In the spirit of the table’s rapier wit, her reviews grew more pointed until publisher Frank Crowninshield finally fired her when she lanced some plays backed by important advertisers. Benchley, in what Parker called “the greatest act of friendship I’d known,” resigned as well.

In a tiny office — “any smaller and it would have been adultery” — Mr. Benchley and Mrs. Parker addressed each other formally (as they did all their lives), read morticians’ publications and accomplished very little until Benchley wangled a job with *Life*, in those days a humor magazine and one that began to publish Parker’s witty poems regularly.

Parker had left Eddie about the same time Crowninshield had fired her and gradually began leading the kind of life that came to characterize the shiny and shallow decade. From the Round Table lunch she would wander with Woollcott or Benchley to a speak-



easy or nearby apartment for drinks, eternally in company drawn from a Who's Who of Manhattan talent. Edna Ferber, Deems Taylor, George Kauffman, Irving Berlin, Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald, Paul Robeson, and Ring Lardner glittered at afternoon drinking parties and evening musicales.

Yet in these heady times, Dorothy Parker was depressed. Ever the perfectionist — "I can't write five words but that I change seven" — she labored over verses that seemed effortless. She made her first suicide attempt after a failed affair with a handsome womanizer, Charles MacArthur. He contributed \$30 to an abortion ("like Judas giving a refund"); she slashed her wrists and received visitors in the hospital with beribboned bandages, joining wit and wounds as her poems often did.

However much she enjoyed the verbal games — the parrying and the dueling, the clever touche — she did not overrate their meaning: "Wit has truth in it. Wisecracking is simple calisthenics with words." Like most humorists, Parker could be serious about humor:

*There must be courage; there must be no awe. There must be criticism, for humor, to my mind, is encapsulated in criticism. There must be a disciplined eye and a wild mind. There must be a magnificent disregard for your reader, for if he cannot follow you, there is nothing you can do about it.*

But she also noted that every time she had tried to "define what humor means to me . . . I had to go lie down with a wet cloth on my head."

Parker is very often the butt of her own jests: the weepy, sentimental, rejected woman gritting her teeth and bearing it all — lost love, smashed illusions, and fixed uncer-

tainties. At the same time, this woman is strong enough to strike back through her angry tears, and to fall for yet another man. Life was, she wrote, "a glorious cycle of song, a medley of extemporanea/ and love is a thing that can never go wrong/ and I am Marie of Roumania." As she delivered her famous lines in soft, polite under-



*Dorothy Parker and her poodle, Cliche, in Hollywood, California, June 1962. Photo courtesy of the Los Angeles Times.*

# They sick of the calm, who know the storm.

Dorothy Parker

tones and lady-like venom, she crafted careful rhythms and precise rhymes which built to cynical conclusions and caustic punchlines.

Her style owes much to Horace and Catullus and A. E. Housman, her friend Elinor Wylie, and to Edna St. Vincent Millay, whose early poems are often misattributed to Parker. In the woman humorist's tradition of self deprecation, and in that equally feminine use of humor to defy male authority, male dominance, and male perfidy, Parker wrote verse like "A Two Volume Novel": The sun's gone dim, and/ The moon's turned black; For I loved him and/ He didn't love back.

She became a kind of icon for the age: irreverent, stylish, surrounded by men whose love she would seek and lose. Her heart might break, but she had put it, knowingly, at risk, as in "Unfortunate Coincidence":

*By the time you swear you're his,  
Shivering and sighing,  
And he vows his passion is  
Infinite, undying —  
Lady, make a note of this:  
One of you is lying.*

One of the first lights of the *New Yorker*, she contributed both fiction and verse, joining distinguished company that would include James Thurber, E.B. White, Benchley, and others. She truly blossomed as the decade moved on: she collaborated

on a play, a novel, and a film script. She published a successful collection of her poems, *Enough Rope*, and made her first trips to Europe to enjoy the pleasures of the times at the expense of richer friends. She published in all the major magazines, and as a kind of climax to the decade, in 1929 she won the O'Henry award for the best short story. On the other hand, she also drank more and tried suicide again.

Criticized frequently as "slight," "narrow," and "dated," Dorothy Parker's fiction "is anything but slight, concerning as it does life, death, marriage, divorce, love, loss, dogs, and whisky" (Regina Barraca). It is marked by an attention to form, a precision of dialog, and emerges, "smart as a kick in the shins." As her play, *The Ladies of the Corridor* and "I Live on Your Visits" deal frankly, wittily, and sympathetically with lonely age, "The Lovely Leave" and "Here We Are" treat the reefs and rapids of marriage.

As the high living of the earlier days sagged with the Depression, the Round Table faded from public view. Benchley and several others went to Hollywood. Parker and Alan Campbell, her new and younger husband followed. From 1931 until she was blacklisted in 1949, she and Campbell collaborated on screenplays, winning Academy Award nominations for *A Star is Born* and *Smash-Up*. The

boozy, undirected life in California offered her more money than she'd ever dreamed of, but she and Alan squandered it. "Hollywood money isn't money," she said, "it's congealed snow — melts in your hand."

The world events of the thirties and forties forced her attention away from herself to political causes. Like most of her friends she had protested the sentences of Sacco and Vanzetti in 1927. Concerned that most screen writers made far less than she did, Parker helped found the Screen Writer's Guild. She joined others in the Anti-Nazi League. Her involvement in the far left began to affect her writing as she began to question the system that had brought her success. By 1937, she had invested in Ernest Hemingway's *The Spanish Earth* and could no longer keep on the sidelines. She made a trip to Spain, one that was brief and difficult, but important to her. "Soldiers of the Republic," based on an actual incident but treated as fiction, showed her ability to treat a serious topic as cleanly as her admired Hemingway.

In the forties, the personal losses began: first, Woolcott, then Benchley, Charles MacArthur — all victims of the alcoholic habits cultivated so long ago — and her sister Helen. After the war, her marriage to Campbell failed. When a doctor told Parker he didn't like

her kidneys, she told him she didn't like his nose. Following a brief success with *The Coast of Illyria*, written with lover-collaborator Ross Evans, she remarried Alan Campbell.

Her pre-war social protest and anti-Fascist stance brought Parker to the attention of the FBI and the House UnAmerican Activities committee. Questioned by agents at her house while her boxer, Misty, barked and jumped at the men, she complained: "Listen, I can't even get my dog to stay down. Do I look like someone who could overthrow the

government?" Although she escaped jail, she was blacklisted. In 1953, *Ladies of the Corridor*, a new play written with Arnold D'Usseau, won critical praise but closed quickly.

Even though she grew more and more unreliable at meeting deadlines, and sank more deeply into drink and melancholy after the 1963 death of Campbell, *Esquire* continued to send her books for review. Longtime friends cared for her and brought her food. Still, it was not surprising that when she

died in June 1967 at Hotel Volney, she had the company only of her dog — one of scores during her lifetime — perhaps suitably named C'Est Tout (that's all). Parker would have enjoyed the joke.

Shortly after her death, Wyatt Cooper, writing in *Esquire* concluded, "If you didn't know Dorothy Parker, whatever you think she was like, she wasn't. Even if you did know her, whatever you thought she was like, she probably wasn't." The last laugh is hers.

## Meet Anne Bail Howard (Dorothy Parker)

Anne Bail Howard has spent more than thirty years teaching at the University of Nevada, Reno, after completing academic work at the University of Colorado, Boulder, and the University of New Mexico. She has taught courses in American literature, specializing in nineteenth century and in women writers. A former board member of the Nevada Humanities Committee, Howard performed as Louisa May Alcott and Kate Chopin with the Great Plains Chautauqua from 1991-97 before joining the cast of the National Chautauqua Tour.





# Timeline: Dorothy Parker

- 1893 Parker is born August 22 in West End, NJ to J. Henry and Eliza (Marston) Rothschild.
- 1897 Parker's mother dies.
- 1900–1908 Parker attends Blessed Sacrament Convent, New York City and Miss Dana's School.
- 1913 Parker's father dies.
- 1914 Parker first published poem appears in *Vanity Fair*.
- 1915–20 Parker becomes a staff writer for *Vogue* and a staff writer and drama critic for *Vanity Fair*.
- 1917 Parker marries Edwin Pond Parker.
- 1919 The Algonquin Round Table meets for the first time.
- 1920–23 Fired from *Vanity Fair*, Parker becomes drama critic for *Ainslee's* and a contributor to *Life* and other popular magazines. Her first book, *Songs for No Siree!* is published. Parker has an abortion and attempts suicide.
- 1924–25 Parker writes a play, *Close Harmony*, with Elmer Rice. She also writes her first film script.
- 1926–27 *Enough Rope* is published and becomes a best seller. Parker becomes a book reviewer for the *New Yorker*. She is arrested at a protest against execution of Sacco and Vanzetti.
- 1928–29 *Sunset Gun* is a best seller and "Big Blonde" wins the O Henry Award. Parker divorces Eddie Parker.
- 1930–33 *Laments for the Living, Death and Taxes* is published. Parker writes drama reviews for the *New Yorker*.
- 1933–36 In Hollywood Parker marries Alan Campbell. She collaborates on screenplays; helps found the Screen Writers Guild and the Anti Nazi League.
- 1937 Parker receives an Academy Award nomination for *A Star Is Born*; reports on the Loyalist cause from Spain for *New Masses*.
- 1938–44 Parker writes screenplays for *Sweethearts*, *Little Fox*, and *Saboteur*. The Viking Portable *Dorothy Parker* becomes a best seller.
- 1947 Parker receives a second Academy Award nomination for *Smash-Up*. She divorces Campbell.
- 1949 Parker writes *Coast of Illyria*, a play, with Ross Evans. She is blacklisted in Hollywood.
- 1950 Parker remarries Campbell.
- 1952 Parker writes a play, *Ladies of the Corridor*, with Arnold d'Usseau.
- 1956–57 Parker writes additional lyrics for *Candide* and becomes a book reviewer for *Esquire*.
- 1958–59 Parker is inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Letters.
- 1963 Parker is named a distinguished visiting professor at California State College, Los Angeles. Alan Campbell dies.
- 1967 Parker is discovered dead of a heart attack in hotel room in New York.

## Suggested Readings: Dorothy Parker

Although Parker published a number of volumes, many are out of print. The most readily available are these:

*The Portable Dorothy Parker*. Introduction by Brendan Gill. New York: Penguin Books, 1973.

Sample the poems; read "Big Blonde," "A Telephone Call," "The Lovely Leave," "You Were Perfectly Fine," "I Live on Your Visits," "Soldiers of the Republic"; sample the reviews, particularly "Oh, Look — A Good Book!" and "Far from Well."

*Complete Stories*. Edited by Colleen Breese, introduction by Regina Barreca. New York: Penguin Books, 1995. Barreca's introduction is more sympathetic than Gill's (see above).

*Dorothy Parker: What Fresh Hell Is This?* Marion Meade. New York: Penguin Books. A not particularly sympathetic treatment, but rich in detail.



## Dorothy Parker on the Web

As you explore the Internet, you might want to visit these web sites pertaining to Dorothy Parker.

**Dorothy Parker in the Twenties — A Member of the Round Table**  
[www.la.psu.edu/~jselzer/burke/parker~1.htm](http://www.la.psu.edu/~jselzer/burke/parker~1.htm)

**Dorothy Parker Biography**  
[www.pce.net/steverai/algonquin/members/parker.htm](http://www.pce.net/steverai/algonquin/members/parker.htm)

Two homepages describing Parker's involvement with the Algonquin Round Table, with connecting links to other pages about other members.

**Dorothy Parker Quotes**  
[www.chesco.com~artman/parker.html](http://www.chesco.com~artman/parker.html)

This site features a number of quotations from Parker's reviews and poetry.

**A Few Poems by Dorothy Parker**  
[www.mat.upm.es/~jcm/dorothy/dorothy.html](http://www.mat.upm.es/~jcm/dorothy/dorothy.html)

**Dorothy Parker Poetry**  
[www.electricbody.com/rope.html](http://www.electricbody.com/rope.html)

These sites feature a sampling of Parker's verses.

**Dorothy Parker — Two Famous Book Reviews**  
[demolition.nildram.co.uk/~bethie/parker.html](http://demolition.nildram.co.uk/~bethie/parker.html)

Find out what it was like to be on the receiving end of Parker's literary criticism by checking out this homepage.

# Langston Hughes

## Politics, Humor and American Culture

By Charles Everett Pace

As a writer and cultural critic, James Langston Hughes engaged the American public in an ongoing conversation about race and democracy for almost half a century. Born in Joplin, Missouri and educated at Lincoln University, Pennsylvania, Hughes published a voluminous amount of work in a variety of genres: poetry, fiction, journalism, drama, and history. He was the recipient of numerous honors including membership in the National Institute of Arts and Letters, Rosenwald and Guggenheim fellowships and the Spingarn Medal. A U.S. Presidential "cultural ambassador" appointee, Hughes used his work to advance the cause of a more peaceful world community. In his life, art and continuous commitment to service, Hughes was, indeed, "the people's poet."

Hughes's first popular and critical success came in 1921 with the publication of his poem, "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" in *The Crises* magazine. As the official organ of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), edited by W.E.B. DuBois, *The Crises* was the most respected and widely read journal of black political and cultural commentary in America. When white writers and critics such as Vachel Lindsay and Carl Van Vechten began to champion Hughes' work, the elite book publishing world opened to him.



*Langston Hughes cradles a piece of Mexican art in this photograph by Gordon Parks. Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress.*

Van Vechten (who remained a life-long friend) introduced Hughes to his publisher Alfred A. Knopf, which resulted in the publication of Hughes's well-received first book of poems, *The Weary Blues* (1926).

His second book, *Fine Clothes for the Jew* (1927) was assailed, particularly by the black press, for its presentation of what was considered to be "low class" black "blues" culture.



## Advice

*Folks, I'm telling you,  
birthing is hard  
and dying is mean —  
so get yourself  
a little loving  
in between.*

This disagreement concerning the "proper" subject matter for black art emerged as the primary difference between the established black middle class and the rising group of younger African-American writers such as Wallace Thurman, Zora Neale Hurston and Hughes.

The source of this conflict regarding aesthetic values had its origins in the historical representation of black folk in American culture, most notably in the stereotypical portrayal of African-Americans described by historian Donald Boogle as "Toms, Coons, Mulattos and Bucks." Du Bois, along with other members of the black elite, took the position that art should be used as an instrument of positive propaganda. Du Bois argued that only positive images of black people should be projected into the dominant American mainstream. Hughes, on the other hand, felt that a more effective weapon against a lie was an unapologetic representation of the truth. Accord-

ing to Hughes and his young colleagues, the truth must consist of the portrayal of all aspects of contemporary black life. The black working class served as the primary subject matter for these black literati, those whom Thurman dubbed and Hurston humorously popularized as "the Niggerati."

Hughes used humor to expose, to critique and to engage the public in a dialogue about the short-comings inherent in the society he lived. In his article "My Adventures as a Social Poet," Hughes wrote "The major aims of my work has been to interpret and comment upon Negro life, and its relations to the problems of Democracy." The primary problem, of course, was the denial of democracy for American Negroes through the legal institution of segregation. America, in law and in custom, was a "Jim Crow" society. By the 1930s Hughes had become a master at using satire, irony, and humor as a weapon in the battle against the Jim Crow system. This strategy, we discover, has historical roots beginning with the original black "working class," the enslaved Africans of the antebellum period.

Humor is a device which the oppressed use to express their opposition to the oppressor. This was certainly the case with African Americans in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. British actor and comedian John Bernard, who lived and traveled in the United

States from 1797 to 1819, referred to the enslaved Africans as "the great humorists of the union." Bernard said the Africans humor "lowered the most dignified subjects into ludicrous lights and elevated the most trivial into importance." It is this creative act of inversion, referred to as *topsyturvydom* by Henri Bergson, which characterizes the humorous as a part of the "absurd" dimension of life. And few things have historically appeared more absurd to African-Americans than one group of humanity being engaged in practices which elevates and privileges itself, at the expense of an "other" branch of the human family.

Therefore, Hughes was able to see and to creatively respond to this sense of the absurd as a malignancy in the American social and political landscape. Hughes once quipped, "Jim Crow is serious business, I admit . . . yet, Jim Crow is also desperately and grotesquely funny." This story recounted by Lawrence Levine echoes Hughes's observations:

*A white deacon in Mississippi walks into his church and finds a Negro standing there. "Boy," he calls out. "What you doin' in here? Don't you know this is a white church?" "Boss,*

## Situation

*When I rolled three 7's  
in a row*

*I was scared to walk  
out with the dough.*

*Humor is when the joke is on you but hits the other fellow first — before it boomerangs.*

Langston Hughes

*I only just got here to mop up the floor," the black man informs him. "Well, that's all right then," the deacon responds. "But don't let me catch you prayin'."*

To read Hughes's work is to understand that humor is a form of coping, a type of therapy and maybe even a way of transcendence when one lives in an unjust and mocking society. Hughes once noted that "Colored people are always laughing at some wry Jim Crow incident or absurd nuance of the color line. If Negroes took all the white world's daily boorishness to heart and wept over it as profoundly as our serious writers do, we would have been dead long ago."

Hughes was fortunate. He always took a broad view of life. By 1940 this cosmopolitan had traveled extensively in Mexico, Haiti, Cuba, France, and Italy, as well as docked in several countries along the West Africa coastline. He had made an extensive trek across the Soviet Union, dined in China with Madame Sun Yat-sen, and been kicked out of Japan as a leftist. These experiences made him keenly aware of the liberation currents rapidly moving throughout the world community and their implications for a change in the nature of American race relations. For example, World War II, where black and brown men fought for white

freedom, ushered in a significant change. In Hughes words:

*Pearl [Harbor] put Jim Crow  
on the run.  
That Crow can't fight for Democracy  
And be the same old Crow it  
use to be—  
Although right now, even today,  
He tries to act in the same old way.  
But India and China and  
Harlem, too.  
Have made up their minds  
Jim Crow is through . . .*

While a careful reading of Hughes's poetry underscores the fact that he understood you might have to "laugh to keep from crying," he still met with a fair amount of criticism about his social use of humor. For instance, the *Chicago Defender*, the nation's oldest black newspaper exclaimed: "We laugh too much . . . there is nothing to laugh at, except our condition, and it's too serious to be funny. There is nothing funny about a people who cannot find a grocery store in the community in which they live owned by them." In response to a similar criticism directed at his comic play *Tambourines to Glory*, Hughes lays bare his functional theory of humor. "People forget that comedy, as well as, tragedy, can be used as a weapon of social criticism." No where did Hughes employ this weapon more effectively than in his work as a journalist, first for the *Chicago Defender* and later for *The New York Post*.

In 1942 Hughes began writing a weekly column "Here to Yonder" in the *Chicago Defender*, which he continued for the next 23 years. Through the *Defender's* national edition, he reached hundreds of thousands of new readers. In 1943, Hughes delighted his growing body of fans by introducing in the column his most notable and best loved comic creation, Jesse B. Semple (known as "Simple"). Through the persona of Simple, Hughes educated his growing black audience about national and international issues and showed the effect of these issues on the daily life of the black community. Simple dramatizes black issues, puts a human face on black thoughts and personalizes black dreams. In 1950 the columns were re-worked and appeared in a pioneering series of books: *Simple Speaks His Mind*, *Simple Takes a Wife*, *Simple Stakes a Claim*, *The Best of Simple*, and *Simple's Uncle Sam*. In his *New York Times* review of *Simple Speaks His Mind*, by far the best received of all of Hughes's books, Carl Van Vechten called it "better than a dozen vast and weighty and piously pompous studies on race relations." Hughes's major biographer, Arnold Rampersad, informs us that "Within a few years . . . Simple had grown into a notable, Afro-American addition, without parallel in the twentieth century, to the long line of popular fictional humorists in American literature dating back

at least a hundred years. By that time he had established his claim to be recognized as a distant, dark-skinned cousin of white characters such as those in the worlds of Artemus Ward, Petroleum V. Nasby, Josh Billings, and, in the twentieth century, Finley Peter Dunne's engaging Mr. Dooley."

Simple even made a surprising appearance in a personal letter Hughes penned to his best friend, Arna Bontemps. Here Simple improvises around the melody of a well know Negro Spiritual:

*Swing low,  
Sweet integrated chariot  
Coming for to intergrate my home.  
I looked over Georgia  
And what did I see  
Coming for to integrate my home?  
A band of the N  
Double A C P  
Coming for to integrate my home . . .*

Hughes used humor in his own unique way. In the introduction to his text, *The Book of Negro Humor*, Hughes shares with us that, as a tonic for whatever ails you, "Humor is your own unconscious

therapy." Well now. Humor, if respected, contrary to the opinion of some of Hughes's more serious minded critics, is a very able companion. "Humor maintains its distance while at the same time keeping you company so long as you are capable of meeting it halfway." Go on, Langston. "Like a welcome summer rain, humor may suddenly cleanse and cool the earth, the air, and you." Hush!

## Meet Charles Everett Pace (Langston Hughes)

Charles Everett Pace is a veteran Chautauquan and has performed as Langston Hughes, Frederick Douglass, W.E.B. Du Bois, Booker T. Washington, and Malcolm X in humanities programs across the country. Pace holds a MA in American Studies from Purdue University, where he is doctoral candidate. He is instructor of anthropology and African American studies at Centre College in Danville, KY.





## Timeline: Langston Hughes

- 1902 James Langston Hughes is born in Joplin, Missouri on February 1st.
- 1916 Hughes attends Central High School in Cleveland, Ohio.
- 1919 Hughes travels with his father to Toluca, Mexico
- 1920 At his high school graduation, Hughes is elected class poet.
- 1921 Hughes's poem, "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," is published in the NAACP's magazine, *The Crises*. He travels to New York City and begins studies in mining engineering at Columbia University; he leaves Columbia after his freshman year.
- 1923–24 Hughes travels to Africa, the Netherlands, and Paris.
- 1926 Hughes publishes his first book of poetry, *The Weary Blues*, to good reviews.
- 1927 *Fine Clothes To the Jew*, a second book of poetry, is published and receives harsh reviews.
- 1929 Hughes graduates from Lincoln University in Pennsylvania.
- 1930 *Not Without Laughter*, a novel, is published.
- 1931 Hughes visits Cuba and Haiti.
- 1932 Hughes works in the Soviet Union on film project; travels as a reporter for *Izvestia*.
- 1937 Hughes covers the Spanish Civil War for the American press.
- 1940 Hughes's first autobiography, *The Big Sea*, is published. The FBI begins its surveillance of Hughes.
- 1942 Hughes begins his weekly column, "Here To Yonder" in the *Chicago Defender*.
- 1944 Hughes is attacked by the Special Committee on Un-American Activities of the House of Representatives.
- 1947 *Street Scene* opens on Broadway to rave reviews (Hughes is the play's lyricist).
- 1949 Hughes spends a semester as a visiting teacher of writing at the Laboratory School, University of Chicago.
- 1950 The first of the Simple collections from the *Chicago Defender* is published in book form, *Simple Speaks His Mind*. Three other collections are ultimately released: *Simple Takes a Wife* (1952), *Simple Stakes a Claim* (1957), and *The Best of Simple* (1961).
- 1951 *Montage of a Dream Deferred*, a volume of poetry, is published.
- 1952 *Laughing to Keep From Crying* is published.
- 1953 Hughes testifies before Senator Joseph McCarthy's subcommittee.

- 1956 *I Wonder As I Wander* is published.
- 1958 Hughes co-edits *The Book of Negro Poetry* with Arna Bontemps.
- 1959 A collection, *Selected Poems*, is published by Knopf.
- 1960 Hughes is awarded the Spingarn Medal from the NAACP.
- 1960–63 Hughes travels to Europe and Africa as cultural emissary for the U.S. State Department.
- 1962 Hughes begins writing a weekly column for the *New York Post*.
- 1966 Hughes heads the American delegation at the Senegal Arts Festival.
- 1967 Hughes dies from complications following prostate surgery at New York Polyclinic Hospital.
- 1969 *Black Misery* published.

## Langston Hughes on the Web

As you explore the Internet, you might want to visit these web sites pertaining to Langston Hughes.

**Langston Hughes: Related Sites**  
[www.liben.com/Hugheslinks.html](http://www.liben.com/Hugheslinks.html)

This homepage consists of links to other Hughes sites, including the *Langston Hughes Review* (publication of the Langston Hughes Society) and *Home in Harlem*, a page featuring famous landmarks and architecture as well as notable residents.

**It's a Hughes Thang!**  
[www.cwrl.utexas.edu/~mmaynard/Hughes/hughes.htm](http://www.cwrl.utexas.edu/~mmaynard/Hughes/hughes.htm)

This site provides background on Hughes's role in the Harlem Renaissance, with links to additional information on jazz, black artists and white patrons. The text of several of Hughes's poems can be accessed from this page.

**Seminar on the "Blues" Poems of Langston Hughes**  
[nthsrv2.jsr.cc.va.us/wcb/schools/283/350/bglen9/forums/forum16/wwwboard.html](http://nthsrv2.jsr.cc.va.us/wcb/schools/283/350/bglen9/forums/forum16/wwwboard.html)

Essays by students studying Hughes's "blues" poems can be found on this webpage.



## Suggested Readings: Langston Hughes

### Primary Sources

*The Langston Hughes Reader: The Selected Writings of Langston Hughes*. New York: George Braziller, 1958. Contains generous selections from Hughes's novels, stories, plays, autobiographies, poems, songs, blues, articles, and speeches, as well as a Hughes bibliography.

*The Big Sea: An Autobiography*, 1940; New York: Hill and Wang, 1996.

*I Wonder As I Wander: An Autobiography*, 1956; New York: Hill and Wang, 1992.

"My Adventures as a Social Poet," 1947 in "Hughes Black Esthetic" by Onwchekwa Jemie in *Critical Essays on Langston Hughes*, Edward J. Mullen, ed., Boston: G.K. Hall, 1986.

*The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes*. Arnold Rampersad and David Roessel, eds. New York: Vintage Books, 1994.

*Arna Bontemps and Langston Hughes Letters, 1925–1967*. Charles H. Nichols, ed. New York: Paragon House, 1980.

### Secondary Sources

Apte, Mahadev L. *Humor and Laughter: An Anthropological Approach*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985.

Berger, Peter L. *Redeeming Laughter: The Comic Dimension of Human Experience*. New York: Walter De Gruyter, 1997.

Harper, Donna Akiba Sullivan. *Not So Simple: The "Simple" Stories by Langston Hughes*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1995.

Hughes, Langston. *The Book of Negro Humor*. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1966.

Levine, Lawrence W. *Black Culture and Black Consciousness*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1977.

Rampersad, Arnold. *The Life of Langston Hughes: I Too Sing America Volume I: 1902–1941*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Rampersad, Arnold. *The Life of Langston Hughes: I Dream a World Volume II: 1941–1967*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.

### Recommended for Children

Dunham, Montrew. *Langston Hughes: Young Black Poet*. New York: Aladdin, 1995.

Huggins, Nathan Irvin. *Langston Hughes: Poet*. New York: Chelsea House Publishers.



# Will Rogers

## The Gospel of Humor and Human Brotherhood

By Doug Watson

"There are many echoes, but only now and then an original voice . . . many people, but only now and then an outstanding individual." These words from the funeral eulogy for William Penn Adair Rogers suggest the regard that millions of Americans had for him at the time of his death in 1935. The *New York Times* said he had "done more to educate the American public in world affairs than all the professors." President Franklin Roosevelt said Rogers had "brought his countrymen back to a sense of proportion. He showed us how to laugh." For a nation in the depths of depression, this was true patriotism, true citizenship.

Will Rogers — cowboy, movie actor, newspaper columnist, radio personality, and humorist — was first of all a citizen. Born to part-Cherokee parents in Indian Territory (before it became the state of Oklahoma), Rogers was always ready to put in a good word for his native land, be it the town of Claremore, the state of Oklahoma, or the United States of America.

As his fame grew, Rogers became more and more a world-citizen and a spokesman for all humankind, but the language, ideas, and attitudes for which he was known remained the same and reflected his own folksy beginnings. In the words of a recent biographer (Yagoda), he was "an apostle of common sense" dedicated to the gospel of humor and human brotherhood. "I joked about every prominent man of my time," Rogers said, "but I never met a man I didn't like."



*Will Rogers. Photo courtesy of the Billy Rose Theatre Collection, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts—Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations.*

There must have been a few exceptions, but almost everybody liked Rogers, too. He was the most popular male movie actor in the two years before his death. More than a few churches suffered

declines in Sunday evening attendance when Will's "Good Gulf Radio Show" took to the airways. Over four hundred newspapers ran his syndicated weekly columns (1922–35) and daily "telegrams" (1927–35) that came in from

*We shouldn't elect a President; we should elect a magician.*

Will Rogers

wherever in the world Rogers happened to be traveling. Millions of people read these, if they read nothing else in the papers. Ironically, it was from these same newspapers that Rogers claimed to have gotten "all I know."

Rogers loved to travel. His wanderlust began long before his fame. By the time his roping act appeared on a New York vaudeville stage in 1905, roping and rope spinning had taken Rogers to the Texas panhandle, San Francisco, St. Louis, Madison Square Garden, Argentina (by way of London), South Africa and Australia. The rest of his life was spent on the go — all over the United States, around the world twice, frequent trips to Europe and a visit to Russia before it was officially acceptable. A well-known aviation booster, Rogers flew whenever possible. Otherwise he went on horseback, on trains, by automobile, or, when there was no other choice, by boat. When he died in an Alaskan plane crash with aviator Wiley Post, their plans had pointed across Siberia toward Europe and eventually back to the United States.

For all his geographical wanderings, Will Rogers was regarded as "just home folks," and that pleased him. He never lost contact with his roots — three sisters, their families and lots of friends back in Oklahoma. He seemed most satisfied when relaxing with his own family — wife Betty, sons Will Jr. and Jim, and daughter Mary. At his "ranch" in California he enjoyed playing

polo with show business friends as much as he did roping calves with "cowman" friends. He called himself the "luckiest man alive" and pointed to his home and family as evidence. But he was also one of the most familiar and successful men of his era.

Borrowing a phrase from Calvin Coolidge, Rogers once quipped that the way to prosperity was to "buy some stock and hold it until it goes up, then sell it [but] if it don't go up, don't buy it." Rogers didn't invest his money in the market, but the record of his own "stock" is an enviable one. From vaudeville to Florence Ziegfeld's Follies and Frolic, to the dozens of movies with Samuel Goldwyn and Hal Roach and John Ford, to the thousands of pieces that hundreds of newspapers printed, to broadcasting on the national radio networks, to knowing and mingling with virtually all of the "big men" in the political and business circles of the 1920s and 1930s, the line graph of his success traced an almost constantly rising value.

The income from his various involvements put Rogers among the wealthiest Americans of the early depression era. But he seems to have been less interested in making or hoarding money than he was in giving it away to numerous charities. His humor often took to task those driven to make a profit, i.e., the bankers. Ironically, Roger's own father was a banker for several years, after leaving his ranch in the

care of his son. That made Rogers' views no less strident: "Abolish the banks and do away with the bankers' 'sucker game' of loaning money in order to live on interest alone." Instead, he suggested that the bankers "go to work — if there's a job any of them can earn a living at." He objected to the big men helping only the other big men, thinking there might be some redemption in loaning out most of the banks' accumulations to "a lot of the little fellows that need it."

Rogers also poked fun at the political figures in Congress and in the presidency. He knew and liked many congressmen and senators individually, but he loved to jibe them collectively. "We have the best Congress money can buy," he said. "They're really just children that never grew up." But he thought them financially senseless ("Congress — their plan is pass all bills with an appropriation attached") and often without regard for the people they represented. "They are the professional joke makers. I could study all my life and not think up half the amount of funny things they can think of in one session of Congress." But such an image served his humor well. "People ask me where I get my jokes. Why, I just watch Congress and report the facts."

Will performed for or with Presidents Wilson, Coolidge, Hoover, and Roosevelt. He respected the office and always claimed to be terrified about how his jokes might be taken by the presidents, but he



joked about them just the same. He joked about Wilson's frustrations with the peace negotiations after the War. He kidded about Harding's difficulties in office, but offered a forgiving explanation. He poked fun at Coolidge's taciturn manner, but agreed with the President's aims to keep big government out of normal people's business. Rogers really did admire Hoover for his intelligence and good intentions, but got a laugh out of that too, saying that he was curious to see "how far a competent man could go in politics ... It has never been tried before." Rogers delivered one of his most memorable radio addresses ("Bacon, Beans, and Limousines") on a 1932 program shared with President Hoover. He joked that "you probably won't hear any more of Amos 'n Andy after tonight — it'll just be Hoover and Rogers." Rogers' speech may have caught the nation's tone better than the President's comments, for by then the country knew the choking grip of depression, and soon after, election swept FDR into office.

Some evidence suggests Franklin Roosevelt worried that Rogers might be a candidate for president in 1932. Rogers had gotten a delegate's vote at an earlier convention and had gone along with a facetious 1928 *Life* magazine campaign for the Anti-Bunk party with "He chews to run" as his slogan. But Rogers proved to be a strong supporter of FDR, believing that Roosevelt was intent on trying to

bring real reform to a nation badly in need of it, against the objections and opposition of big businessmen and bankers. Before FDR had been in office two months, Rogers declared that FDR had "done more for us in seven weeks than we've done for ourselves in seven years." When some of the President's plans (like the NRA) met with failure, Rogers' humor softened the blow about the difficulty of "the Supreme Court agreeing on anything."

Offering an out-of-office consolation, Rogers spoke of Hoover as "a very human man." It was one of the highest compliments Rogers could pay. It suggested a common quality of concern and empathy without which no person could be a part of any "true civilization" in which "we have learned to recognize the rights of others." Such empathy and honesty informed much of Rogers' humor. "I use only one set method in my little gags, and that is to try to keep to the truth." He picked on public men and their pretensions, not on those who were down and out. And he didn't intend his humor to inflict pain on its victims; he was gentle in his joking. "I don't think I ever hurt any man's feelings by my little gags. I know I never willfully did it. When I have to do that to make a living I will quit." His faith in human brotherhood depended on "the real common sense of the big Normal Majority."

The range of his humor and his serious attentions was broad. Technology — especially aviation —

he thought worthy of his and the nation's support, but capable of serious misunderstanding and misuse. What passed for scientific advance, he reminded his audiences, wasn't always advance. He urged broader cultural acceptance in America and in the world, even as he joked about his own "Cherokee blood making me prejudiced." He hoped to be "broad-minded" about all things, especially religion which he thought important but often misdirected. On these and many other topics, Will offered opinions — usually humorous ones — and from his expressed opinions developed his fame.

With fame came inevitable power, and some of Rogers' contemporaries feared, resented and/or envied him for it. A few, like fellow vaudevillean and movie actor, W.C. Fields, suggested that Rogers' folksy ways and speech were "a fake . . . I'll bet a hundred dollars he talks just like anybody else when he gets home." Others, including Heywood Broun and Ed Sullivan, thought that Rogers' political opinions, especially about foreign affairs, represented a dangerous form of meddling. Some serious political office seekers, including FDR, apparently worried that Rogers might use his public platform to run for political office. But if Rogers did occasionally seem to take his political opinions and his "self-made diplomat" status seriously, he remained primarily a humorist whose credibility demanded a distance from the official political arena. This distance coupled with



*We can't all be heroes because somebody has to sit on the curb and clap as they go by.*

Will Rogers

his common words and ways gave Rogers his real power — the power to joke and urge reform, to name and focus attention, and to bring laughter and healing out of sorrow and suffering.

Many people thought of Will Rogers as a hero, but his own words certainly discounted the idea. "This thing of being a hero, about the main thing is to know when to die. Prolonged life has ruined more men

than it ever made." There seems little reason, however, to suppose that prolonged life would have severely diminished Rogers' popularity or social impact or his own satisfaction with his life. When Will Durant wrote to him asking for a statement of his philosophy, Roger's answer was brief and typically common sensed: "Get a few laughs and do the best you

can. . . . Believe in something for another world, but don't be too set on what it is. . . . Live your life so that whenever you lose, you are ahead." When Rogers' plane went down near Point Barrow on August 15, 1935, he was.



## Meet Doug Watson (Will Rogers)

Doug Watson is a native of Texas but has lived in Shawnee OK since 1980 where he is professor of English and director of the honors program at Oklahoma Baptist University. He teaches courses in American literature, western civilization, poetry, classical literature, and children's literature. Watson has been involved with Chautauqua programs since 1991 when he performed as Nathaniel Hawthorne for the Great Plains Chautauqua Society. Since then, he has performed in over 250 humanities programs portraying Hawthorne and Stephen Crane. His Will Rogers program debuted in January 1998 and has kept him busy ever since.

## A Will Rogers Bibliography

The major repository of Rogers' papers and other materials is the Will Rogers Memorial in Claremore, Oklahoma. Large portions of Rogers's writings have been collected, edited, and published (or reprinted) by the Oklahoma State University Press. There are also many books about Will Rogers and many topical collections of his "sayings." This bibliography attempts to cite accessible sources for the major primary works and to suggest a sprinkling of secondary publications of interest to the general reader. For a much more detailed bibliography, consult Peter C. Rollins' *Will Rogers: A Bio-Bibliography* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1984) or *The Writings of Will Rogers*, Steven K. Gragert, ed. (Stillwater: Oklahoma State University Press, 1983); the latter is a topical index of the writings.

### Primary Sources:

*Will Rogers' Daily Telegrams, 1926-1935.* 4 volumes. James M. Smallwood, ed. Stillwater: Oklahoma State University Press, 1978-79. "Telegrams" (usually no more than a few sentences) that were syndicated in over 400 newspapers.

*Will Rogers' Weekly Articles, 1922-1935.* 6 volumes. James M. Smallwood and Steven K. Gragert, eds. Stillwater: Oklahoma State University Press, 1980-82. Articles first appeared in New York papers and later received wider circulation.

*Convention Articles of Will Rogers.* Joseph A. Stout, Jr., ed. Stillwater: Oklahoma State University Press, 1976. Rogers' reports from major political conventions, 1924-32.

*Radio Broadcasts of Will Rogers.* Steven K. Gragert, ed. Stillwater: Oklahoma State University Press, 1983. Broadcast transcripts from 1930-35.

*Letters of a Self-Made Diplomat to His President.* New York: Albert and Charles Boni, 1926; reprinted, Stillwater: Oklahoma State University Press, 1977. Observations of culture and politics from Rogers' international travels in the early- to mid-1920s.

*Ether and Me, or Just Relax.* New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1929; reprinted by OSU Press, 1973; reprinted by Will Rogers Heritage Trust, 1994. Witticisms based on Rogers' gall bladder operation.

*There's Not a Bathing Suit in Russia.* New York: Albert and Charles Boni, 1927; reprinted by OSU Press, 1973; reprinted by Will Rogers Heritage Trust, 1994. Witticisms based on Rogers' travels to Russia.

*The Illiterate Digest.* Joseph A. Stout, Jr., ed. Stillwater: Oklahoma State University Press, 1974. Spoof of the *Literary Digest*; includes pieces that appeared first as "Weekly Articles."

*Rogersisms: The Cowboy Philosopher on the Peace Conference* and *Rogersisms: The Cowboy Philosopher on Prohibition.* New York: Harpers and Brothers, 1919; reprinted by OSU Press, 1973.

### Secondary Sources

Carter, Joseph. *Never Met a Man I Didn't Like: The Life and Writings of Will Rogers.* New York: Avon Books, 1991. This book by the director of the Will Rogers Memorial is a good introduction for the non-specialist.

Croy, Homer. *Our Will Rogers.* New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1953. An inside perspective written by a friend of the Rogers family.

Day, Donald, ed. *The Autobiography of Will Rogers.* Chicago: People's Book Club, 1941. Writings by Rogers edited into a roughly narrative autobiography.

Garst, Shannon. *Will Rogers: Immortal Cowboy.* New York: Julian Messner, 1950. Probably the most widely read children's biography of Rogers.

Milsten, David R. *Will Rogers: The Cherokee Kid.* Chicago: Glenheath Publishers, 1987. Primary focus on the early life of Rogers.

Rogers, Betty. *Will Rogers: His Wife's Story.* New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1941; reprinted by University of Oklahoma Press, 1979. This intimate biography provides an "inside" perspective on the public man.

Yagoda, Ben. *Will Rogers: A Biography.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993. Most thorough and analytical of the current biographies.

# Timeline: Will Rogers

- 1879 William Penn Adair Rogers is born on November 4th, the son of Clem Vann Rogers and Mary America Scrimsher Rogers.
- 1887–92 Rogers attends various schools in Indian Territory: Drumgoole, Presbyterian Mission School, and Harrell Institute.
- 1892–96 Rogers attends Willie Halsell College, Vinita, Indian Territory.
- 1896 Rogers briefly attends Scarritt College Institute, Neosho, Missouri.
- 1897–98 Rogers attends Kemper Military School; Boonville, Missouri; he leaves during the fall of his second year.
- 1898 Rogers works as a cowboy for the Ewing Ranch near Higgins, Texas, helping with a couple of cattle drives.
- 1899–1902 Rogers manages his father's ranch land and participates in several roping contests.
- 1902 Rogers leaves for South America (via England) with friend Dick Parris; after several months with Argentinean gauchos, he takes a boat to South Africa.
- 1903 Rogers joins "Texas Jack's Wild West Show" as the Cherokee Kid, a "trick" roper and rider; he is also briefly with Wirth Brothers Circus in Australia and New Zealand.
- 1904 Back in the United States, Rogers joins Colonel Zack Mulhall's Wild West Show at the St. Louis World's Fair; before the year is out, he has several vaudeville bookings.
- 1905 After a trip to New York City with Mulhall's Show, Rogers begins a vaudeville career that spans ten years.
- 1908 Rogers marries Betty Blake at Rogers, Arkansas on November 25th.
- 1911–15 The Rogers have three children during this time: Will, Jr., (1911), Mary Amelia (1913), and James Blake (1915).
- 1915–25 Rogers performs with the Ziegfeld Frolic and Follies.
- 1918 Rogers's third son, Fred Stone, is born. Rogers makes his first movie, a silent film entitled *Laughing Bill Hyde*; over the next seventeen years, he makes seventy more movies.
- 1919 Rogers publishes *The Cowboy Philosopher on the Peace Conference* and . . . *on Prohibition*. He moves to California to fulfill movie contract with Goldwyn Studio.
- 1920 Rogers's son Fred dies of diphtheria.
- 1922 Rogers makes his first radio broadcast; he also produces and stars in his own movie. He begins a series of weekly syndicated articles for the McNaught Syndicate which continue until 1935.
- 1923 Rogers publishes *The Illiterate Digest* and stars in several Hal Roach comedies.



- 1925–28      Rogers travels all over the United States on a lecture tour to raise money for victims of Florida hurricanes and Mississippi floods. He is made honorary mayor of Beverly Hills and he begins "Daily Telegrams," syndicated in over 400 newspapers. Rogers visits England, Russia, Mexico, and other countries; he flies with mail plane pilots coast to coast.
- 1929          Rogers makes his first talking film for Fox Film Corporation; he completes twenty-one films by 1935.
- 1930–35      Rogers makes radio broadcasts for Squibb & Sons and for Gulf Oil.
- 1931          Rogers travels to London (for disarmament conference), Nicaragua (to aid earthquake and fire victims), and to other Central and South American countries.
- 1934          Rogers makes a trip around the world.
- 1935          Rogers dies in plane crash with Wiley Post near Point Barrow, Alaska on August 15.

## Will Rogers on the Web

As you explore the Internet, you might want to visit these web sites pertaining to Will Rogers.

### Will Rogers: Quotes

[www.cmgww.com/historic/rogers/quote.html](http://www.cmgww.com/historic/rogers/quote.html)

This homepage features quotes from Will Rogers on a wide variety of subjects.

### Will Rogers Homepage

[www.willrogers.org/homepage.html](http://www.willrogers.org/homepage.html)

Biographies of Will Rogers and his wife, Betty, can be found at this site.

### Will Rogers: 1879–1935

[ion1.ionet.net/~jellenc/rogers.html](http://ion1.ionet.net/~jellenc/rogers.html)

This webpage includes a biography of Rogers, a filmography, and a number of famous quotations, as well as links to the Will Rogers Memorial and a sound file of Roger's voice.



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# Humanities in Maryland

## From the Resource Center

The following videotapes may be borrowed from the Maryland Humanities Council's Resource Center. For further information call Polly Weber at 410-625-4830.

### Voices and Visions

Series surveys the achievements of thirteen American poets over the last 150 years, using archival materials, location cinematography, drama, dance, animation sequences, and interviews. *Langston Hughes: The Dream Keeper* explains how Hughes wrote about the problems, cares, and dignity of African-Americans, as well as the way his poetry is derived from African-American musical sources, vocabulary, and dialect patterns of black urban speech.

### Lives that Shaped a City

Tells the stories of a series of extraordinary individuals whose foresight, daring, collaboration, and hard work shaped the city of Baltimore. Lives range from that of a businessman-turned-soldier who masterminded the city's defense against the British in 1814 to a man born into a poor family of twelve children in Baltimore's "Pigtown" who rose to serve as mayor and governor.

### Riding the Rails

Looks at the story of 250,000 teenagers who took to the road during the height of the Great Depression in search of work or adventure in other parts of the country. People now in their seventies who "rode the rails" appear on camera to tell about their experiences.

### TR, The Story of Theodore Roosevelt

Two-part series focuses on the extraordinary life of President Theodore Roosevelt.

## Money Available

Nonprofit organizations and community groups are eligible to apply for grants from the Maryland Humanities Council. Staff members will help you plan programs and work on grant applications. To receive a copy of our grant guidelines, call or write the Council (address and phone number on back cover) or retrieve them from the Council's homepage located at <http://www.gcnet.net/mhc>.

There are two kinds of grants. Minigrants (requests of \$1,200 or less) should be submitted at least six weeks before your project begins; there are no set deadlines for minigrants. Regular grants should be submitted by the following deadlines for consideration in the next round:

First Draft	Final Draft	Decision Date
June 15, 1998	July 31, 1998	September 19, 1998
October 15, 1998	November 30, 1998	January 23, 1999

# Maryland Bookshelf

## Autobiography / Biography

*The Stevensons: A Biography of an American Family*, Jean H. Baker

*Further Fridays: Essays, Lectures and Other Non-fiction, 1984-1994*, John Barth

*The Duchess of Windsor*, Michael Bloch

*A Cornish Childhood*, Anne Burley

*Strictly Business: Walter Carpenter at DuPont and General Motors*, Charles W. Cheape

*Rosa Ponselle: A Centenary Biography*, James A. Drake

*Hernando de Soto*, David Ewing Duncan

*The Making of a Falcon*, Dominic Fino

*Thomas Paine: Apostle of Freedom*, Jack Fructman, Jr.

*Urban Rhythms, Urban Blues: Life in the Big City*, Wiley A. Hall 3d

*The Last American Aristocrat: The Biography of Ambassador David K. E. Bruce*, Nelson D. Lankford

*Paradoxes of Fame: The Francis Scott Key Story*, Sam Meyer

*No Free Ride: From the Mean Streets to the Mainstream*, Kweisi Mfume with Ron Stodghill

*Memoir of the Bookie's Son*, Sidney Offit

*Sweet Memory: A Book of Remembering*, Judith Hillman Paterson

*At His Side: The Last Years of Isaac Babel*, A. N. Pirozhkova translated by Anne Frydman and Robert L. Busch

*You're No Good to Me Dead*, Robert E. Stahl

*The Miss Dennis School of Writing and Other Lessons from a Woman's Life*, Alice Steinbach

*In Search of Heroes*, Joseph Taler

*Chesapeake Boyhood: Memoirs of a Farm Boy*, William H. Turner

*Alexander Smith Cochran: Modernist Architect in Traditional Baltimore*, Christopher Weeks

*Woodholme: A Black Man's Story of Growing Up Alone*, DeWayne Wickham

*The Wildest One: The Life of Wild Bill Davison*, Hal Willard

## Philosophy and Religion

*Spiritual Living in Secular Society*, Archbishop William D. Borders

*Father Joe: A Year of Wit, Wisdom and Warmth and Stops Along the Country Road*, Rev. Joseph Breighner

*The Papal Visit: Pope John Paul II in Baltimore, The Event in Pictures*, Cathedral Foundation Press

*Philosophical Imagination and Cultural Memory: Appropriating Historical Traditions*, Patricia Cook, editor

*Our Future in the Light of Twentieth-Century Evil: Hope, History, and Human Culture*, Robert Frey

*To Hell & Back with Dante: A Modern Reader's Guide to The Divine Comedy*, Father Joseph Gallagher

*Daughter of Zion: Henrietta Szold and American Jewish Womanhood*, Eric L. Goldstein, Joyce Antler, and Barry Kessler

*Anti-Judaism in Feminist Religious Writings*, Katharina von Kellenbach

*Body and Bible: Interpreting and Experiencing Biblical Narratives, Men's Bodies, Men's Gods: Male Identities in a (Post-) Christian Culture, and Remembrance and Reconciliation: Encounters Between Young Jews and Germans*, Bjorn Krondorfer

*Finding a Home for the Soul: Interviews With Converts to Judaism*, Catherine Hall Myerowitz



## Non-Fiction

*Five Fair Rivers*, Robert De Gast

*Quilts from the Smithsonian: Twelve Designs Inspired by the Textile Collection of the National Museum of American History*, Mimi Dietrich

*Blacked Out: Dilemmas of Race, Identity, and Access*, Signithia Fordham

*Passions: The Wines and Travels of Thomas Jefferson*, James M. Gabler

*Cultures of Print*, David D. Hall

*Hearts and Hands: Women, Quilts and American Society*, Elaine Hedges, Pat Ferrero, and Julie Silber

*Revising Herself*, Ruthellen Josselson

*Invisible America: Unearthing Our Hidden History* by Mark P. Leone and Neil Asher Silberman

*What If? Exploring the Paths Not Taken in American History*, Martin H. McKibben

*The Martinetti Family*, John A. Pentz

*For the Greatest Achievement: A History of the Aero Club of America and the National Aeronautic Association*, Bill Robie

*Repression, Exile, and Democracy: Uruguayan Culture*, Saul Sosnowski and Louise B. Popkin, editors

*Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, Michael-Rolph Trouillot

*The I of the Beholder*, Stephen Vicchio



## Calendar of Humanities Events

The following programs are receiving funds from the Maryland Humanities Council. Council grants are made possible through major support from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Maryland's Division of Cultural and Historical Programs, corporations, foundations, and individuals. Since dates and times are subject to change, we recommend you contact the project director before attending any event.

### Exhibits

Through  
April 1999

**Something Extra: Traditional Decorative Carvings on Chesapeake Bay Work Boats**

Exhibit examines the important role that decorative boat carvings have played in the lives of the watermen who use them and the craftsmen who created them.

Location: Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, St. Michael's  
Contact: *Peter Lesher, 410-745-2916*  
Sponsor: Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum

Through  
February 2000

**Colonial Capitals of the Chesapeake: Jamestown and St. Mary's City**

Exhibit traces the evolution of two seventeenth-century colonial capitals, St. Mary's City and Jamestown, revealing their similarities and differences, and assessing the impact of political, economic, and social forces of the day.

Location: Exhibit Gallery at Historic St. Mary's City Visitor Center  
Contact: *Silas Hurry, 301-862-0973*  
Sponsor: Historic St. Mary's City Foundation

### Programs

September 16  
7:00 PM

**An Exploration of Cultural Myths and Cultural Realities**

Lecture by George L. Scheper explores the history and culture of Bosnia in relation to its immediate neighbors, Serbia, Croatia and the other republics of the former Yugoslavia.

Location: Fairhaven Library, Sykesville  
Contact: *Marti Ellerbrock, 410-795-8800 x3628*

Sponsor: *Speakers Bureau, Maryland Humanities Council*

September  
17-20  
1998

**Sharpsburg Heritage Festival**

Special programming, including a lecture series, walking and bus tours, a quilt exhibit, and a drama interpreting the lives of mid-nineteenth century women, highlights this annual festival that takes place in conjunction with the anniversary of the battle of Antietam. For a detailed schedule of events, contact the project director.

Location: Town Hall of Sharpsburg and Antietam National Battlefield  
Contact: *Pat Holland, 301-432-7707*  
Sponsor: Town of Sharpsburg

September 19  
TBA

**Mercy Amidst the Mischief and Misery: The True Story of Civil War Medicine**

Lecture by Burton Kummerow explains how thousands of military and civilian men and women from the North and South faced the war's emergencies with skill and determination and set medicine on a path to the modern era.

Location: Town Hall, Sharpsburg  
Contact: *Pat Holland, 301-432-7707*  
Sponsor: *Speakers Bureau, Maryland Humanities Council*

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September 19    **A Fiery Passage: Children and  
11:00 AM        Adolescents in the Civil War**

Lecture by Peter Bardaglio investigates the distinctive meaning of what children and adolescents, black and white, in the North and South experienced and felt during the Civil War.

Location: St. Paul's Episcopal Church,  
Sharpsburg

Contact: Dick Hynson, 301-432-4762

Sponsor: *Speakers Bureau*, Maryland  
Humanities Council

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August            **Post-Show Discussion Series**  
26 & 29

September 10    Post-show panel discussions with scholars,  
10:30 PM        actors, and community representatives  
will follow selected performances at the  
Olney Theater Center during its 1998  
season.

Location: Olney Theater Center, Olney

Contact: James Petosa, 301-924-4485

Sponsor: Olney Theatre

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September 16    **Discovery of the Electron**  
6:00 PM

Lecture examines the history of the  
electron and its impact on science and  
society.

Location: Historical Electronics Museum,  
Linthicum

Contact: Michael Cross, 410-765-3110

Sponsor: Historical Electronics Museum

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## Free Speakers!

During 1998, the Maryland Humanities Council is presenting its second series of *Speakers Bureau* programs throughout the state. Outstanding humanities scholars are available for presentations, without charge, to civic and community groups in Maryland. The Council pays for the scholar's honorarium and travel expenses — all the sponsoring organization must do is provide a space and an audience.

At press time, the following speakers were still available for the 1998 season: David Dean, *Bicycling Across History: Following the Trek West of Our Mid Nineteenth Century Ancestors*; Bjorn Krondorfer, *The Holocaust in History and Contemporary Society*; Carla Peterson, *The Presence of the Past: African-American Culture and Race Relations in Historical Perspective*; Priscilla Ramsey, *The Harlem Renaissance Movement, Its Art and Politics*; George Scheper, *Bosnia: An Exploration of Cultural Myths and Cultural Realities*; Marianne Strong, *Myth as Mirror of Society*; and Paul Wapner, *Environmental Ethics in an Age of Global Concern*.

For more information about the *Speakers Bureau* contact Polly Weber, 410-625-4830.

# Maryland Revisited

Since our annual summer Chautauqua in western Maryland begins on the fourth of July weekend, it seemed appropriate that this feature highlight some images reminiscent of patriotism from the files of the Maryland State Archives, Annapolis.

In the photo at left, two children clutch a number of precious items including a doll, a drum, and two American flags. Photo courtesy of SPECIAL COLLECTIONS (Robert Merrick Collection) MSA 1477-5106.

In the bottom photo, Leo Beachy penned "Love Waiteth For Your Return, My Solider Boy" as the caption for his portrait of a friend patiently sitting by the Casselman River in Grantsville. Photo courtesy of SPECIAL COLLECTIONS (Robert Merrick Collection) MSA SC 1477-5740.





# Maryland's Best Kept Humanities Secrets

## Hampton National Historic Site

Hampton National Historic Site  
535 Hampton Lane  
Towson, MD 21286-1397  
410-823-1309  
Superintendent: Laurie E. Coughlan

Grounds open 9 AM – 5 PM daily  
Mansion tours offered on the hour, 9 AM – 4 PM  
Admission:  
Adults \$5  
Seniors (with a Golden Age Passport) \$2  
Children free



A part of the National Park Service, Hampton National Historic Site preserves and interprets the remains of a once vast and opulent southern estate. When it was completed in 1790, the mansion was the largest house in the United States. Remaining today are some twenty-five buildings, large formal gardens, slave quarters, a family cemetery, and other outbuildings. Hampton Mansion is fully furnished with thousands of original furnishings.

Hampton was the home of the Ridgely family for 158 years. The original tract of 1,500 acres was purchased in 1745; work on the mansion began in 1783 and it

was completed seven years later. The original occupants were Captain Charles Ridgely and his bride, Rebecca Dorsey. The mansion's unique combination of classical design and five-part Georgian plan was probably conceived by Captain Ridgely and his chief carpenter, Jehu Howell.

Highlights of the mansion include a magnificent collection of decorative arts including Maryland silver, Baltimore painted furniture, and Ridgely family portraits by Peale and Sully. The grounds are striking and feature five state champion trees.



# An Interview with Barbara Wells Sarudy

By Stephen G. Hardy



*Barbara Wells Sarudy came to the Maryland Humanities Council as its Executive Director in October 1991 after leaving her doctoral studies in history at the University of Maryland College Park where she had received her MA in history. Her book, Gardens and Gardening in the Chesapeake, 1700–1805 has just been published by The Johns Hopkins University Press. She is married with four grown children and two grandchildren. Before coming to the Council, she worked for five years at the Maryland Historical Society as its Administrative and then Acting Director.*

*What is the business of the Council?*

I really love my job because it gives me the chance to make the insights that come from studying the humanities available to all the people of Maryland. Our state humanities council, like most in the country, is committed to presenting public humanities programs that bring people together, academics and regular citizens, to share ideas about our history and culture and to learn from each other. It used to be that just white-haired old women in tennis shoes — pretty much like me — attended these programs in local libraries. Today we take programs to housing projects, police athletic leagues, senior centers, prisons, and community centers to spread the word as broadly as possible, and there is much less white hair to be seen.

*Don't our colleges spread the humanities?*

Well, I didn't go back to school for my graduate studies until I was almost 50, so I was already pretty opinionated and set in my ways. I came to graduate school from a museum and library setting where educating the public about the history of our state was one of our main concerns. To do that, we tried to be as clever and creative as possible to sort of hook them into history, young and old.

But once I got to the university and figured out what was going on, it seemed to me that not many

academic humanists think of their work in terms of the public good. I guess they get so caught up in their own specialties — getting tenure track positions and promotions, trying to impress their important and influential colleagues, and training new specialist PhDs — that many forget the people who brought them to the dance. Because, for the most part, it is public tax dollars that supply our academics with a safe haven, tenured security, libraries, and many hours each week to devote to their research. As a result of all this research, most write books and articles so dense and full of jargon that usually only their colleagues can wade through them.

*Don't academics have to do research and write to get tenure and promotions?*

They do, so it is not so much the individual academics, but the system that should bear the responsibility. Academics also teach, of course, generally with the help of teaching assistants like I was when I was in grad school. Because the academics usually lecture, and the grad students usually conduct all of the discussions, most of the professors spend little time getting to know their undergraduate students, who will become "the public." Perhaps we need to encourage our university administrators to change their reward system for promotion and tenure. We could reward great teachers in the same way we reward erudite research. Perhaps taking the humanities to senior centers and

housing projects and prisons could earn a professor a few points as well, because those who do commit time to the public humanities work hard to make informed understanding shareable among all our citizens.

Good academic teachers can share their knowledge and insights with a variety of people, and those who do are incredibly valuable resources for both the academic and the general communities. Many volunteer countless hours to public

humanities pursuits such as sitting on boards like ours and receive no tenure or promotion recognition for this at all.

*You have just written a book — is it full of jargon?*

I surely hope not. It seems to me that we can make knowledge available to a variety of readers without sacrificing perspective and accuracy. Good scholarship can be honorably — even cleverly — returned to the public.

*The year 2000 is just over the horizon. How can the humanities fit into the 21st century?*

I think we need to commit ourselves to a humanities that promotes communication within families and communities; alleviates the distrust inherent in segmented, alienated societies; and celebrates the common human condition by trying to understand all of its diverse components.



*Once upon a time I met myself and ran.*

— Gertrude Stein

*Don't run away! You'll miss the chance to read about Gertrude Stein, Anne Tyler, Sterling Brown and other famous Maryland authors in Literary Maryland II, the Fall 1998 issue of Maryland Humanities.*



*I think joy is just as instructive as pain, and I like it better.*  
Katherine Anne Porter



*If that's true, then Katherine would have loved the Baltimore Book Festival! The Maryland Humanities Council is delighted to join the Baltimore Office of Promotion in bringing this outstanding two-day festival back to Baltimore City. Now in its third year, the Baltimore Book Festival will bring delighted smiles to the faces of thousands of Marylanders when it returns to the historic Mt. Vernon community on September 27-28, 1998. It's the ideal pain-free environment in which to learn more about the literary arts. You can't ask for much more joy than that! For a complete schedule of events, contact the Baltimore Office of Promotion at 410-752-8632 or check out the Baltimore Book Festival homepage at [www.bop.org/bfmain.html](http://www.bop.org/bfmain.html).*

Maryland

**HUMANITIES**

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# HUMANITIES



Literary Maryland II

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## To Our Readers

It was with great pride that I accepted Barbara Sarudy's invitation to guest edit an issue of *Maryland Humanities*. At our first lunch, she smiled patiently when I told her that the soul of the humanities was literature, and therefore I had to do an issue about Maryland's rich literary tradition. I smiled back at her indulgently when she reminded me that the humanities embrace many areas outside the formulae of science, not just books of fiction. I rated the exchange a draw. Yet I knew I was closer to the truth.

Literature deals with the unreal, no matter how much like us the people in it may seem. The *humanities* generally deal with mankind. But as W. Somerset Maugham wrote, "If the proper study of mankind is man, it is evidently more sensible to occupy yourself with the coherent, substantial and significant creatures of fiction than with the irrational and shadowy figures of real life." It is, therefore, the locus of the music, or print, or painting, or sculpture, or philosophic idea, or quilt pattern, that matters most in literature. "In the true novel," Arthur Koestler wrote, "as opposed to reportage and chronicle, the main action takes place inside the characters' skull and ribs."

In this issue we deal with *belle lettres*, specifically those which originated in Maryland. The dictionary suggests that *belle lettres* is literature regarded for its aesthetic value rather than for its didactic or informative content. Yet Neil Grauer's trip through the grand tradition of Maryland *belle lettres* shows just how much the Free State — in particular Baltimore — gave heart and soul to the many writers who were born here, passed through during their careers, or simply came here to die. Corinne Funk examines the role Baltimore plays in the literary achievements of Anne Tyler. Gertrude Stein's life, and her unique explorations of the English language, is discussed by Lynn Miller, and Niccolò N. Donzella explores Sterling Brown's devotion to preserving the folk tradition of African-American letters, both as a poet and as an anthropologist.

To all of the writers for *Literary Maryland II*, I extend my thanks. As I do to Barbara Sarudy, who permits me to cluck that literature is the foundation of the humanities, and Baltimore is one of the foundation stones.

Christopher Olander  
Guest Editor

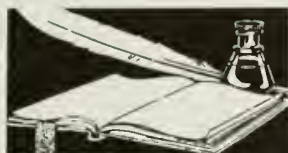
Christopher Dean Olander is the managing partner of Shapiro and Olander in Baltimore and concentrates in corporate finance and merger transactions. As a practitioner, law school teacher, author, and lecturer, Chris Olander is recognized as one of the country's top lawyers in the field of securities regulation. He is actively involved in Maryland civic organizations which focus on the problems of the mentally ill and mentally retarded and serves as a trustee of the Sheppard Pratt Foundation and The Chimes Foundation. And, in addition to all of these activities, Chris Olander loves to read, and for that we are grateful.

Barbara Wells Sarudy  
Executive Director





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Maryland

## HUMANITIES

*Maryland Humanities* is a publication of the Maryland Humanities Council, an independent, nonprofit, tax-exempt organization. Council programs receive major support from the National Endowment for the Humanities, with additional funding from the Maryland Division of Historical and Cultural Programs, corporations, foundations, and individuals.

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# Baltimore's Literary Heritage

By Neil A. Grauer

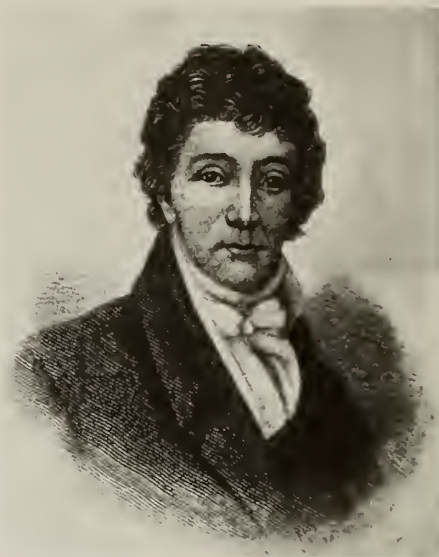
Baltimore's devotion to *belles-lettres* — and to *lettres* not so *belles* — is nearly as old as the city itself. In the past two decades, however, Baltimore has experienced a revitalization on its literary front that is as extraordinary and striking as its Inner Harbor's rejuvenation.

In 1988 the works of three Maryland writers — two of them from Baltimore — hit the bestseller lists, and during one springtime week in 1989, four writers with Baltimore connections received the nation's top prizes in writing and film making: the Pulitzer and the Oscar. Such a shower of encomiums for Baltimore-nurtured talent prompted two reporters for the *Sun* (one of them a Pulitzer Prize-winner herself) to ponder in print: "Is culture replacing crab cakes as this city's chief export?" Hardly. But for a city not generally associated in the public mind with cultural accomplishments, Baltimore's recent achievements seem all the more stunning.

Baltimore's role as a literary city has been long-lasting, diverse, and distinguished. The city's first burst of belletristic activity began shortly after the War of 1812 with the founding of the Delphian Club, a social and literary group, in 1816. Among the Delphians were writers of three of the nation's most popular — and enduring — songs: Francis Scott Key, who authored "The Star-Spangled Banner"; Samuel Woodworth, who wrote "The Old Oaken Bucket"; and John Howard Payne, an actor who penned "Home Sweet Home."

Not long after the Delphian Club folded its tent, Baltimore became the home of a struggling young writer named Edgar Allan Poe. He had moved to Baltimore to live with relatives, including his teenage cousin, Virginia Clemm, who became his wife. He lived with her family from 1832 to 1835 in two different tiny houses, including the residence at 203 North Amity Street now preserved as the Edgar Allan Poe House and Museum. While there, Poe received his first public recognition as a writer, winning a \$50 prize from the *Baltimore Saturday Visitor* for "Ms. Found in a Bottle," which was published in the October 19, 1833 edition of the magazine. One of the judges for the magazine's contest was Baltimore attorney John Pendleton Kennedy, who befriended Poe and helped advance his career by introducing him to the editor of the *Southern Literary Messenger*, a magazine to which Poe became a regular contributor and ultimately editor. Poe left Baltimore in 1835 but made a last, fatal visit to the city in September 1849. It is said that Poe was waylaid by political thugs, plied with drink, used as a multiple voter in a local election, and left to die. He, his wife, and mother-in-law are buried in the city's Westminster Burying Ground, another shrine to which the world's many Poe admirers pay homage.

Except for the late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century works by the once acclaimed but now obscure poets Sidney Lanier and Lizette Woodworth Reese, Baltimore's literary field lay fallow



Portrait of Francis Scott Key. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

until the 1920s. Then the colorful fulminations of H. L. Mencken, which had been gaining in notoriety for a decade, exploded upon the national consciousness. His biting observations in the *Evening Sun*, in books, and in popular magazines made an indelible mark not only on the 1920s but also on American literature. His scholarly masterpiece, *The American Language*, remains the definitive lexicon of our native tongue. Publication of his long-secret diary in 1988 (thirty-three years after his death in 1956) caused a major literary ruckus, and the unsealing of several additional volumes of autobiography in 1991 and 1994 added further to his reputation as a major figure in American literary history — just as Mencken expected, and no doubt wished, when he ordered that these volumes be sealed for thirty-five years after his death.

Mencken was by no means the only famous writer working in Baltimore during the 1920s — he was simply the best known. With his encouragement, other local authors began making names for themselves.

Dashiell Hammett, a real-life detective in the Baltimore office of the Pinkerton agency, began submitting detective stories to the *Black Mask*, a twenty-cent fiction magazine edited by Mencken and George Jean Nathan. Within ten years Hammett would write *The Thin Man* and *The Maltese Falcon* among other classic tales. James M. Cain, a reporter for Mencken's newspaper, the *Evening Sun*, later wrote *The Postman Always Rings Twice*, *Double Indemnity*, *Mildred Pierce*, and a dozen other novels. Gerald W. Johnson and R. P. Harriss, friends and colleagues of Mencken from the *Evening Sun's* editorial page, became best-selling authors. Fulton Oursler, a reporter for the old Baltimore *American* during the 1920s, later wrote the religious epic *The Greatest Story Ever*

*Told*; and the impish poet Ogden Nash, who settled in town with his Baltimore-born wife, caught the nation's fancy with his witty — and often incisive — rhymes.

In the 1930s, F. Scott Fitzgerald, down on his luck, moved to Baltimore with this emotionally unstable wife, Zelda, who sought treatment at the Sheppard-Pratt Hospital. Fitzgerald had ancestral ties to the city; his full name was Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald, in honor of his great-uncle. Here he worked fitfully on *Tender Is the Night*, drank heavily, and mused melancholically, "Baltimore . . . is so rich with memories . . . I belong here, where everything is civilized and gay and rotted and polite." He, Zelda, and their daughter Scottie now rest in Saint Mary's Cemetery in Rockville.

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, Johns Hopkins University graduated Russell Baker and John Barth, both of whom became masterful writers. William Manchester, a transplanted New Englander, began his writing career as a reporter (and protege of the aging Mencken) for the *Evening Sun* at the same time Russell Baker began with its morning sibling, the *Sun*, earning the writing spurs that would later win him a column at *The New York Times* and two Pulitzer Prizes. One of these was for his enchanting memoir, *Growing Up*, which dealt in large measure with his youth in Baltimore. Anthony Lukas, a Baltimore native, became a reporter for the *Sun*, beginning a career that also would lead to the *New York Times* and a pair of Pulitzers.



*Progress might have been all right once,  
but it's gone on too long.*

Ogden Nash





A scene from the television series, *Homicide*, based on the book by David Simon. Photo courtesy of NBC Television.

Today Baltimore's literary scene is as laden with talent as at any time in the city's history. David Simon, a *Sun* reporter who spent a year with the city police's homicide squad, produced not only a riveting newspaper series about their work but a bestseller as well, which in turn has become *Homicide*, the acclaimed television series produced by Baltimorean Barry Levinson, Academy Award-winning director of *Rain Man*, and writer-director of a trilogy of "Baltimore films," *Diner*, *Tin Men*, and *Avalon*.

Reporters for the *Sun* have bagged several Pulitzers in the past few years, but Baltimore's newspapers are not the only source of today's literary achievements. Poet, playwright, and essayist Daniel Mark Epstein, one of the city's most versatile writing talents, has five volumes of poetry, five prose works, two plays and the prestigious Prix

de Rome to his credit. Poet and short story writer Josephine Jacobsen has served a term as poet in residence at the Library of Congress. *The Washington Post's* Pulitzer Prize-winning book critic, Jonathan Yardley, until recently wrote books in his Roland Park home, while the *Post's* Baltimore correspondent, Paul Valentine, produces mystery books from his Homeland residence. Other local writers whose work receives national exposure and approbation include Christopher Corbett, a comic novelist; Madison Smartt Bell, author of grimmer tales; his wife, poet Elizabeth Spire; short story writer Steve Dixon; and John Waters, screenwriter, essayist and master of such avant-garde movies as *Pink Flamingos* and *Female Trouble*, as well as such mainstream (more or less) movies as *Hairspray* and *Serial Mom*.

The committees, peers, and public who reward literary excellence with citations — and sales — have amply recognized it in the recent works of Baltimore artists. Anne Tyler and Taylor Branch won 1989 Pulitzer Prizes for their respective books, *Breathing Lessons* and *Parting the Waters*, as did Johns Hopkins alumnus James M. McPherson for his history, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*. The same week the Pulitzers were handed out to Tyler, Branch, and McPherson, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences gave Barry Levinson the Oscar for best director — and two Oscars were awarded to the film adaptation of Tyler's tenth novel, *The Accidental Tourist*, which like most of her novels, is set in Baltimore.

"Baltimore is *real* America," filmmaker John Waters told the *Sun* in the wake of these triumphs for the city's artistic community. "It's a great place to create whatever you create, good or bad, because it's away from New York or Los Angeles." Barry Levinson said of Baltimore at the 1987 premiere of *Tin Men*: "It's a great colorful city with great colorful characters. It's a rich and fertile place." John Barth has echoed that sentiment: "Baltimore . . . is a place that continues to charge my batteries," just as it charges the batteries of so many writers who draw inspiration from it.

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Neil A. Grauer is a Baltimore freelance writer, caricaturist, and author of five books including *Remember Laughter: A Life of James Thurber* (University of Nebraska Press, 1994). This article is adapted from his book, *Baltimore: Jewel of the Chesapeake* (Windsor Publications, 1991).

# Anne Tyler

## A Voice Of Contemporary Baltimore

By Corinne Funk

Anne Tyler resides in Baltimore, writing books that give the city a voice in the literary world. Although her novels are works of fiction, she vividly portrays Baltimore as it exists today, and accurately reconstructs the atmosphere of times past. Her experience of living in Charm City filters through to shape the tone of her writing and fills her narratives with vivid descriptions of her adopted hometown.

Tyler, a North Carolina native, moved to Baltimore as an adult and has chosen the city as the setting for most of the novels she has written since the early 1970s. The backdrops for her stories are the old neighborhoods of North Baltimore, as well as the rowhouses in the heart of the city. John Updike lauds this "microcosm-maker," saying, "her Baltimore, though a city of neighborhoods and ingrained custom, is also a piece of the American Northeast and of Western culture. . . . she has made Baltimore, as a site for imaginative construction, her own." Tyler "at once gives the city as it really exists and redefines it through the realm of the imagination," according to critic Jonathan Yardley. In Frank Shivers's *Maryland Wits and Baltimore Bards* (1983), Tyler noted:

*The strongest influence on my writing about Baltimore is simply the city's own unique atmosphere — picked up from conversations overheard; or from the mood at, say, my favorite crab house or an Orioles game on a summer evening; and most*

*of all from the sort of trance I fall into when driving past a string of rowhouses where everyone's perched outside on his stoop.*

Nevertheless, Tyler makes it clear that her vision of Baltimore is not always one of charm. Her first impression of the city:

*Baltimore struck me in the beginning as a very closed place. My first act after we moved to the city was to go buy coffee for the hoards of visiting neighbors I imagined would descend; but nobody did. Gradually, though, I adjusted to the Baltimore way of doing things, which now seems to me a sign of respect for people's privacy.*

Now, years later, she clearly treasures this privacy: "I am happy to say that Baltimore doesn't encourage writers in any particular way at all, as far as I know. It lets them be, which is the kindest favor a city can do."

No matter what her reasons for choosing to write about Baltimore, she has said "It's not that I deliberately chose to live in Baltimore, just that I'm here because my husband is employed here, and now that I'm here I'm very happy with it and very grateful for what it has given my work in terms of character and atmosphere." The city's distinctive neighborhoods, each with its own strong identity and traditions, are fitting locales for Tyler's explorations of how home and family both shape and smother the products of their environments. Tyler's ultimate conclusion is always that "family is fate," and that this situation is "of cosmic necessity, as

the inevitable precondition of human choice" (Mary Ellis Gordon, *Family as Fate: The Novels of Anne Tyler*). Author Larry McMurtry concludes:

*In Anne Tyler's fiction family is destiny, and (nowadays at least) destiny clamps down on one in Baltimore. For an archeologist of manner with Miss Tyler's skills the city is a veritable Troy and she has been patiently excavating since the early 1970's. . . . it is without question some of the fustiest soil in America: in the more settled classes, social styles developed in the 19th century withstand, with sporelike tenacity, all that the present century can throw at them. Indeed, in Baltimore, all classes seem to be settled, if not cemented, in grooves of neighborhood and habit so deep as to render them impervious — as a bright child puts it in *The Accidental Tourist* — "to everything except nuclear flash."*

However much this cloistering tends to drive the children of the family away in Tyler's fiction, so too does the family seem ultimately to pull them back to the center — to siblings or parents, or the home and neighborhood. Even when they leave their hometown, Tyler's characters carry a unique Baltimore spirit out into the rest of the world.

*The Clock Winder*, written in 1972, is the first she wrote as a Baltimorean. The setting straddles Tyler's old and new hometowns, and this transition is embodied in the character of Elizabeth, who has moved from North Carolina to Baltimore. In her adopted city, Elizabeth oversees the maintenance of the home of Mrs.





*I think it would be fun if some bored Baltimore teenager, lounging around on some hot summer day in the future and dreaming of her escape to somewhere that mattered, started reading one of my books and realized that she already lived somewhere that mattered.*

Anne Tyler

Emerson, an “abstracted Baltimore dowager,” who lives in the North Baltimore neighborhood of Roland Park, where she has raised a large “tangle” of a family.

At the end of the book, one of the sons takes his new wife to meet the family, making his way home to Roland Park via the heart of the city:

*Row houses slipped past him in endless chains, with clusters of women slumped on madonnas and globe lamps and plastic flowers alternated with windows boarded up and CONDEMNED signs on the doors. . . . Once out of the downtown areas they drove faster, through the streets that grew steadily greener and cooler. Then they entered Roland Park, and Peter suddenly felt eager to be home. . . . there was the Women's Club where his mother went for luncheons, always in a hat and gloves. And now the wooded road that leads to the house, dark and cool and dappled with sunshine.*

This sense of immobility and tradition which is embodied in Roland Park makes this neighborhood ideal for examining questions of change and rigidity. Tyler says she is drawn to the “time machine aspect of Roland Park, where sometimes it seems that the people think it's still 1910, the year I'd most like to have been alive in.”

This sentiment seems to be echoed by a character in her 1975 novel, *Searching for Caleb*, who says of his family:

*We're not famous, we're not society, we haven't been rich since 1930 and we aren't known for our brains or beauty. But our ladies wear hats, by God! . . . we write our bread-and-butter notes no more than an hour after every visit . . . we always say 'Baltimore' instead of 'Bawlmer.'"*

In the process of chronicling a century of this family's history, Tyler begins to describe her vision of Baltimore beyond the boundaries of Roland Park. The daughter discovers an affinity for fortune telling in East Baltimore. Tyler herself says, “I am absolutely crazy about the part of East Baltimore where the window displays combine the Virgin Mary and Elvis Presley: I have fantasies of living in a little row house there and putting up some painted screens, sitting on my front stoop with Greek or Polish neighbors.” Describing the family's history, she comments on the great-grandfather's occupation in the downtown area: “On any summer day in the 1870's, say, you could find him seated in the old Merchant's Exchange on Gay Street, smoking one of his long black cigars to ward off yellow fever,

waiting for news of his ships to be relayed from the lookout tower on Federal Hill.” This Federal Hill image is a particular favorite of Tyler's, who says, “I like to stand on Federal Hill and imagine what it was like to be a messenger boy in the early days, sent out by a merchant to see whether his ship was coming in.”

Tyler's 1974 novel *Celestial Navigation* marks the first appearance of rowhouses as the centerpieces of family life, a setting that is repeated in many of her subsequent novels. The “long, unbroken walls” of rowhouses which line the downtown neighborhood streets remind her of hamsters or “any of those little animals that cluster in one corner piled up on top of each other even when they have a great big cage they are free to spread out in.” In *Morgan's Passing* (1980) Tyler describes Crosswell Street where “the mothers were waiting on their stoops. They shaded their eyes and discussed the weather, the Orioles, what they planned to serve for supper.” In *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant*, which has been called the “most Baltimorean” of her novels, the simple rowhouse stoop is showing signs of modernity. On one block, “a TV sat on a car hood so if you happened by on foot, you'd have a cross between TV and



audience." Outside the city, communities growing around the beltway are characterized by "fields of high grass, then the backsides of housing developments with clotheslines and motorcycles and above ground circular swimming pools." The book is clearly a portrait of developing Baltimore.

This theme is continued in Tyler's recent novels, which also emphasize the distinct character of the city's neighborhoods. The main character in *Accidental Tourist* "is so devoted to his part of Baltimore even the unfamiliar neighborhoods he visits affect him as negatively as foreign countries." The protagonists of *Breathing Lessons* live in a Baltimore "where things were intermingled — small frame houses like theirs sitting among portrait photographers' studios, one-woman beauty parlors, driving schools, and podiatry clinics."

In *Saint Maybe*, Tyler enters yet another neighborhood, Govans. Although Tyler seems to have explored more of Baltimore with each new novel, she admits: "I am shame-facedly conscious of the fact that I do not live in all of Baltimore. . . . however, I do consciously try to broaden my experience of the city as much as possible." Critics wonder what the future holds for Tyler's explorations of the city.



*On the mend from an accident involving his dog Edward, Macon Leary (William Hurt) takes him for a morning lesson with dog trainer Muriel Pritchett (Geena Davis) in this scene from the film version of *The Accidental Tourist*. Photo courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art.*

James Wolcott wrote, "Anne Tyler is one of my favorite writers, and Baltimore is one of my favorite cities," but wonders whether Tyler had "licked Baltimore to a splinter" and needs a fresh source of inspiration.

No matter what direction Tyler chooses, the strength of her legacy is already clear. Talking with John Updike she mused:

*I think it would be fun if some bored Baltimore teenager, lounging around on some hot summer day in the future and dreaming of her escape to somewhere that mattered, started reading one of my books and realized that she already lived somewhere that mattered.*

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Corinne Funk excerpted this from her work, *Twentieth-Century Baltimore Writers: Literary Voices in the Urban Environment*, which was written as a part of the National Endowment for the Humanities Younger Scholars' Program in 1993. She works at St. Martin's Press in New York City.

# Gertrude Stein

## An American by Way of Paris

By Lynn Miller

"Paris was the natural background for the twentieth century," Gertrude Stein wrote in 1940. "America knew it too well, knew the twentieth century too well to create it." It is fitting that Stein — as passionate about being an American as she was about living in Paris — would become a chief interpreter of modernism and an astute observer of society and culture on both sides of the Atlantic. Her unique position, encompassing both the American taste for the innovative and the French appreciation for the traditional, allowed her to comprehend and negotiate the sea change in the arts from the nineteenth to the twentieth centuries.

Stein championed the new: as a writer, she experimented with language and how it revealed consciousness; as a collector, she recognized early the genius of visual artists like Matisse and Picasso and fostered their careers; and as the magnetic center of the Saturday-night gatherings at her rue de Fleurus studio, she used her verbal brilliance and personal charisma to teach and influence others. She moved to Paris permanently in 1903 and by 1920 was a fixture in the arts community. Visitors at her studio read like a "who's who" of bohemian Paris: Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Sherwood Anderson, Pablo Picasso, Marie Laurencin, Guillaume Apollinaire, Roger Fry, Henri Matisse, and Mabel Dodge were but a few who passed through her doors. As Shari Benstock notes in *Women of the Left*

*Bank*, while Stein's public renown was still ahead of her, "the Left Bank community already belonged to her: she discovered it, founded it, cultivated it. . . . Paris was her 'hometown.'"

Stein was born in Allegheny, Pennsylvania, in 1874, to a German-Jewish family of comfortable means. The family moved to Vienna where her father had business prospects, and Gertrude lived abroad until she was five. Upon their return from Europe, the Steins stayed briefly in New York but soon moved to Baltimore, where Stein's parents, Daniel and Amelia, had been born. Her father, however, was restless, and in 1880 the family moved to Oakland, California. The youngest of five children, Gertrude was a happy, charming, and demanding child. "One should always be the youngest member of the family," she wrote. "It saves you a lot of bother, everybody takes care of you." For the rest of her life, people did take care of her, showering her with attention and adoration. Her childlike qualities were not only endearing but most likely essential to her vision as an artist.

Although comfortable in childhood, Stein was not close to either of her parents. She was extremely attached to Leo, the brother born two years before her, and they were constant companions. Their close, almost symbiotic, relationship continued until Stein met Alice Toklas — the intimacy between the two women finally forced a greater distance between the two siblings.



*Gertrude Stein on a lecture tour of the southern United States, February 1935. Photo courtesy of the Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.*

When Gertrude was fourteen her mother died of cancer, and three years later her father passed away. The eldest son, Michael, took charge of his four siblings, supporting and setting up housekeeping for them all. Michael Stein's hard work, first in paying off his father's business debts and then in carefully building and investing the family finances, made it possible for Leo and Gertrude to attend Harvard and Johns Hopkins and eventually to move to Paris to follow their artistic pursuits with little concern for financial matters.

Unsure what to do with her life, in 1893 Gertrude visited Leo at Harvard University and that autumn enrolled there herself. In 1894 the women's branch of the university was renamed Radcliffe, and it was there that she met the teacher who would shape her art and her life: the great psychologist and philosopher William James, who



*And what does a comma do, a comma does nothing but make easy a thing that if you like it enough is easy enough without the comma.*

## Gertrude Stein

later declared Stein the most brilliant female student he had ever taught. James involved her in his experiments with perception and "selective attention."

Encouraged by James to continue her promising academic career, Stein enrolled in medical school at Johns Hopkins University after graduating from Radcliffe. Back in the relative security of Baltimore, where she was surrounded by many relatives, Stein set up housekeeping with Leo, who was studying biology at Hopkins. In her first two years she lived up to her reputation as a brilliant student, but when Leo made one of his characteristic career shifts, quitting biology and moving to Florence to study aesthetics, Gertrude's interest in medicine seemed to flag. Finally, in her last year, one professor failed her and insisted she retake his course, which she refused to do. She recounts with much humor in *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* her reply to this professor: "You have no idea how grateful I am to you. I have so much inertia and so little initiative that very possibly if you had not kept me from taking my degree I would have, well, not taken to the practice of medicine, but at any rate to pathological psychology and you don't know how little I like pathological psychology, and how all medicine bores me."

Stein's scientific education, particularly her studies with William James, were to have a great impact on her development as an artist.

Her first publication, in the *Harvard Psychological Review*, came at this time, arising out of some experiments on automatic writing. She summarized the results of these experiments in May 1898 as follows: "In these descriptions it will be readily observed that habits of attention are reflexes of the complete character of the individual." This relatively simple phrase is the genesis of Stein's linguistic experimentation from her early and influential book *Three Lives* onward, with Stein attempting to uncover signature details which could indicate a character's entirety. The key tool she used in describing people and personalities was repetition. Building connotative meanings through patterns of repeated words and phrases, she attempted to capture the processes of her characters' thoughts moving through time.

The intent of Stein's repetitions and associations was often misread or misunderstood, earning her the appellation "the Mother Goose of Montparnasse." Stein's method was taken from her work with William James and her careful observations of people in conversation, which she reveals in "The Gradual Making of *The Making of Americans*":

*"I began to get enormously interested in hearing how everybody said the same thing over and over again with infinite variations but over and over again until finally if you listened with great intensity you could hear it rise and fall and tell all that there was inside them, not so much by the*

*actual words they said or the thoughts they had but the movement of their thoughts and words endlessly the same and endlessly different."*

Stein's method of repetition gained momentum from another artistic tool that she developed in *Three Lives* — the "continuous present." She wished to capture the sense of life as it is perceived in the moment. Use of the continuous present allowed her to break away from the tyranny of verb tenses and emphasize the process and associative movement of consciousness, the "constant recurring and beginning" of human thought and speech. Honing her use of this device and her methods of description, association, and repetition in her thousand-page colossus, *The Making of Americans* (written in 1908–9), Stein was to build on these experiments throughout her career. The results can be seen in works like *Tender Buttons* (1914), "Ada" (*Geography and Plays*, 1922), and in her famous word portraits "Matisse" and "Picasso" (1912) and "Miss Furr and Miss Skeenell" (1922).

In 1903 Leo, discouraged with art history, moved to Paris to become a painter. Gertrude, unsure of her direction and recovering from an early failed love affair, joined him at 27 rue de Fleurus. At first she was reluctant to commit to a life abroad, telling Leo she would stay only if she could visit America every year. Leo agreed, recounting in his memoirs: "That year she went to America for a visit and thirty-one years later she went again." By the





*Gertrude Stein with her companion Alice B. Toklas. Photo courtesy of the Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.*

time Gertrude had returned to Paris in 1904, she had determined to make a life for herself there.

In 1907 Alice Toklas journeyed with a friend from San Francisco to Europe. In Paris she met Gertrude through Stein's sister-in-law Sally Stein. The two women's meeting is described in *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, where Alice describes meeting Gertrude Stein: "I was impressed by the coral brooch she wore and by her voice. I may say that only three times in my life

have I met a genius and each time a bell within me rang and each time I was not mistaken." This meeting was momentous for both women who were to live and work together for the next thirty-eight years, until Gertrude's death from abdominal cancer at the age of seventy-two.

The relationship with Toklas was to give Stein an emotional security and stability she had never had before as well as an insightful and intelligent audience (and occasional collaborator) for her work. Entrenched in the bourgeois,

traditional mores with which she had been raised, Gertrude had felt uncomfortable and isolated with her sexuality before the relationship with Alice. The couple's relationship had a traditional nature, Stein assuming the role of "husband," with her more dominant personality and her devotion to her work, and Toklas playing the role of "wife," more concerned with domestic matters and running the household. In spite of this dichotomy, accounts of the period also reveal Alice Toklas as a strong presence in her own right, having definite opinions about the people with whom they interacted and much influence on the course of their mutual lives.

Clearly the relationship allowed Gertrude to break away from her dependence on her brother and to establish her own life. Her tribute to Toklas, *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (1933), which Stein wrote in her partner's voice, demonstrates the collaboration — both personal and artistic — that their lives became. The memoir, with its colorful description of bohemian Paris, became a bestseller, bringing Stein much acclaim and a return to America for her famous lecture tour in 1934–35.

The cost of living was incredibly cheap for Americans in Paris in the early years of the twentieth century, and with their allowance from home, Gertrude and Leo were not only able to live fairly comfortably but also to buy art. Aided by Leo's

# Once upon a time I met myself and ran.

## Gertrude Stein

studies with Bernard Berenson in Florence and his continuing study as a painter, and by Gertrude's growing knowledge and understanding, the two began to frequent Vollard's tiny gallery on the rue Laffite. There the Steins' legendary acquisitions of modern art began. Early appreciators (and purchasers) of artists such as Matisse, Cezanne, Degas, Renoir, and Picasso, the Steins became friends with some of these artists as well. In 1905 they met Henri and Madame Matisse, and the ensuing friendship altered the lives of all four. For Matisse, the friendship meant economic patronage and a loyal and understanding audience. Through Matisse, the Steins met a new and exciting circle of artists, many of whom they began to invite back to the *atelier* (studio) now decorated with the Steins' art collection.

Another artist who was to alter the Steins' lives was Pablo Picasso. Leo discovered his work and purchased it in late 1905. Between 1905 and 1906 Pablo and Gertrude became very close, the beginning of a warm and intense friendship that was to last until Gertrude's death. In 1906 Picasso painted his famous portrait of her, a picture which delighted Stein and puzzled some of her friends. When they complained Gertrude did not look like the portrait, Picasso shrugged and said with assurance, "She will." Besides liking each other enormously, the

two artists shared a passion for new artistic forms, and Gertrude was to say that she was expressing the same thing in literature that Picasso was on his canvasses.

Many people came to see the paintings and to talk about art: the famous "salon" — the Saturday evenings at 27 rue de Fleurus — had begun. In the beginning, Leo dominated the discussions with his lengthy pontifications on modern art; some people attended merely to mock him and the new art he talked about. Gertrude mostly listened. This pattern was to change after the publication of *Three Lives* as Gertrude became steadily more confident and more committed to her career as a writer, while Leo's sense of professional failure deepened. By 1913, Leo no longer bothered to attend the salon, and late that year he moved out of the rue de Fleurus. Stein and Toklas possessed their home and lives fully at last.

During the later years of World War I, Gertrude and Alice helped with the war relief effort, operating from Perpignan and Nimes. Gertrude purchased a Ford van and learned to drive. They visited hospitals, ordered supplies, and made deliveries. After the war, they were in charge of a civilian relief effort in Alsace. Stein's memoirs of these experiences and her observations of living in occupied France during World War II are chronicled in *Wars I Have Seen* (1945).

While she spent most of her adult life in Europe, Stein was passionately an American. In Paris she spoke French, but she wrote only in English. She felt her isolation from her country and her language only increased her loyalty to and her appreciation of America and English. When she returned to France after her triumphant tour in America in 1934, she said, "I am already homesick for America. I never knew it was so beautiful. I was like a bachelor who goes along fine for twenty-five years and then decides to get married. That is the way I feel — I mean about America."

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*Lynn C. Miller is an Austin, Texas, based writer and an associate professor of performance studies at the University of Texas at Austin. In the last five years, she has performed in over a half dozen Chautauquas as Gertrude Stein.*



# Sterling A. Brown

## Preserving the African-American Folk Tradition

By Niccolò N. Donzella

Sterling Allen Brown devoted his life to the preservation of the folk tradition in African-American letters, a labor that required him to pursue and succeed in two careers. As a poet, Brown captured and preserved the cadences, rhythms, and wisdom of a vibrant and largely unrecorded African-American rural folk life. As a critic, anthologist, and teacher, he helped define a canon of African-American letters that included and honored the folk tradition. His energy and commitment to this work endured throughout an extraordinary sixty-year career of writing and teaching.

Born in 1901 in Washington, DC, to parents who had been born into slavery, Brown was the youngest of six children and the only son. His father, Sterling Nelson Brown, was a prominent clergyman, teacher, and author of two books. One, a treatise called *Bible Mastery*, became a standard reference work for those practicing the calling in the African-American community. The other traced the history of the difficult decades following *June 'teenth*, Emancipation Day and emancipation. Brown's mother, Adelaide, had a great love of poetry and Negro spirituals, which she shared with her son.

The Washington in which Brown matured was a segregated city. It was also the home of what he later called "the most distinguished and brilliant assemblage of Negroes in the world." Among the notables living in or frequenting the city were Booker T. Washington, W. E. B.

DuBois, and Alain Locke. Brown's childhood coincided with a time of intense intellectual activity regarding matters of racial progress. Brown's father placed himself and his church in the center of that activity: the Lincoln Temple hosted several of DuBois's debates on "How to Solve the Race Problem," and the elder Brown published several articles calling for racial inclusiveness and justice.

Seeking relief from the charms and stresses of his work, and of the District, Brown's father purchased a small country retreat in Howard County, Maryland, in 1911. Here Brown saw another side of his father, traits formed in the elder Brown's agrarian upbringing in Tennessee. Brown captured that side in the poem, "After Winter":

*He thinks with the winter  
His troubles are gone;  
Ten acres unplanted  
To raise dreams on.*

*The lean months are done with,  
The fat to come.  
His hopes, winter wanderers,  
Hasten home.*

*Butter beans fo' Clara  
Sugar corn for Grace  
An' fo' de little feller  
Runnin' space.*

"De little feller" came of age in this atmosphere of close family ties and heady intellectual and artistic stimulation. Brown attended Washington's segregated schools, which ironically offered him a tremendous academic advantage.

When African-American college graduates discovered they could not find employment in the business and professional worlds, they turned to teaching. Owing to the further lack of teaching opportunities at white schools, and the fact that black teachers in the District were paid the same salary as white teachers, a spectacular faculty of Phi Beta Kappas and PhDs was employed at Brown's alma mater, Paul Lawrence Dunbar High School.

In his senior year, Brown received an academic scholarship to Williams College, where he studied literature and began writing poetry. After his graduation in 1922, Brown began graduate studies at Harvard and became acquainted with the writing of contemporary writers who were to influence the direction of his own work. He was particularly drawn to the Imagists — especially Robert Frost and Edward Arlington Robinson — and their commitment to raising the vernacular in speech and the ordinary in subject matter to the level of serious art. Moreover, those poets were interested in returning controversy to poetry and rescuing it from conservative confines of the academic world.

Like Wordsworth before them, the Imagists wanted to capture the rhythms and meaning of folk life. Essential to the spirit and effect of such poetry was the mastery of dialect — from Carl Sandburg's use of Chicago slang to the new Irish writers' attempts to purify a dialect long debased by English writers. In



these artistic influences and models, Brown discovered his literary goal: to purify an African-American folk idiom possessed of a singular power and expressiveness, which had been bastardized and degraded by American popular literature and culture. By purifying the idiom, Brown sought to rescue and uplift the tradition and the culture that had produced it.

After his graduation from Harvard in 1923, Brown accepted a teaching post at Virginia Seminary. During his sojourn in Lynchburg, Brown visited nearby African-American rural communities, where he was exposed to the cadences and characters that would populate *Southern Road*, his first collection of poems, published in 1932. People like itinerant blues singer Calvin "Big Boy" Davis would visit his classes and eventually lead Brown to the synthesis of idiom and character he searched for as a poet. Brown respected the old guitar player's history as a "rambling man," seeing in it a link to the ballad traditions of both European poetry and the Blues. Brown offered his tribute to these traditions in "The Odyssey of Big Boy."

*Done worked and loafed on such like  
jobs,  
Seen what dey is to see,  
Done had my time wid a pint on my  
hip  
An' a sweet gal on my knee,  
Sweet mommer on my knee . . .*

*Done took my livin as it came,  
Done grabbed my joy, done risked my  
life;*



*Sterling Brown. Photo courtesy of Roy Lewis Photography.*

*Train done caught me on de trestle,  
Man done caught me wid his wife,  
His doggone purty wife . . .*

*I done had my women,  
I done had my fun;  
Cain't do much complainin'  
When my jag is done,  
Lawd, Lawd, my jag is done.*

*An' all dat Big Boy axes  
When time comes fo' to go,  
Lemme be wid John Henry, steel  
drivin' man,  
Lemme be wid old Jazzbo,  
Lemme be wid ole Jazzbo . . .*

Folk life presented Brown with a variety of characters. In contrast to rambling men like Big Boy, he

wrote about the steady lives of salt-of-the-earth types. In "Virginia Portrait," he sketched the mother of one of his students:

*Warm friends, the love of her full-  
blooded spouse,  
Quiet companionship as age crept on  
him,  
Laughter of babies, and their shrewd,  
sane raising;  
These simple joys, not poor to her at  
all;  
The sight of smokeclouds pouring  
from the flue;  
Her stalwart son deep busied with  
"book larnin',"  
After the weary fields; the kettle's  
purr*

*In duet with the sleek and pampered  
mouser;  
Twanging of dominickers; lowing of  
Betsey;  
old folksongs chanted underneath the  
stars . . .*

Like the Imagists, Brown sought and found the heroic in the ordinary, and the poetic in the seemingly untutored turn of phrase. But he was also interested in reclaiming the African-American folk tradition from the clutches of enduring stereotypes, mostly born of the minstrel tradition and popular culture, that tended to portray African Americans as a people lacking the moral dimension required of the subjects of serious art. In poems like "Scotty Has His Say," Brown achieved his goal with a synthesis of rhythm, anger, and pain.

*Whuh folks, whuh folks; don' wuk  
muh brown too hahd!  
Muh brown what's tendin' chillen in  
yol big backyahd.  
Oh, dat gal is young an' tender,  
So jes' don' mistreat huh please,*

*Or I'll put a sprig of pisen ivy  
In yol B.V.D.'s.*

*I got me a Blackcat's wishbone,  
Got some Blackcat ankle dus',  
An' yuh crackers better watch out  
Ef I sees yol carcass fus' . . .*

After *Southern Road*, Brown turned his attention to the work of building a scholarly tradition in African-American letters. Once again he found inspiration in the efforts of Irish authors like Yeats to build recognition for an Irish national literature. Brown recognized that Irish and African-American writers faced a similar problem: the absence of an audience. The prevalence of demeaning stereotypes in the dominant literature had reduced Irish and African-American characters to low comedic roles. These stereotypes discouraged members of both the dominant culture and the Irish or African-American cultures from reading about such characters. Ironically, this was most keenly felt when authors attempted "realistic" folk portraits. Middle-class Irish audiences, looking for a literature that

would paint a supportive, if not flattering, portrait of the "race" were embarrassed and angered by the works of Synge and O'Casey. Similarly, middle-class African Americans often complained about the "negative" portraits of their community painted by writers like Richard Wright.

Reading his way through decades of popular nineteenth- and twentieth-century novels about or involving African-American characters, Brown completed an exhaustive review of the subject. In 1933 he published the results in a seminal article entitled "The Negro Character as Seen by White Authors" in *The Journal of Negro Education*. Brown traced the development of nineteenth- and twentieth-century popular literature, identifying common stereotypes to which he gave such names as the "Brute Negro" and the "Tragic Mulatto." Like DuBois and a great many other scholars and thinkers of the time, Brown pointed to the enduring effects of the "color line" in American culture, which assigned to those with the darkest skin color

*I am an integrationist. . . . by integration, I do not mean assimilation. I believe what the word means — an integer is a whole number. I want to be in the best of American traditions. I want to be accepted as a whole man.*

Sterling A. Brown

the most brutal of passions and the most primitive of intellects, reserving for those with some measure of white "blood" the refined emotions deserving of the honor bestowed by the tragic form. In numerous articles and reviews, Brown taught that you cannot have first class art without a first class audience, and a first class audience understands that serious art is not about the business of racial or ethnic boosterism and flattery.

Finally, a word must be said about Brown's work as an anthologist. His 1941 anthology *The Negro Caravan*, co-edited with Arthur P. Davis and Ulysses Lee, brought together in one volume a comprehensive survey of African-American letters, from its folk roots to its finest contemporary expressions. Accompanying these works were critical and historical articles by the editors, placing the individual works and movements into perspective. Thus, Brown helped to define a canon of American literature much older than the republic and long hidden beneath stereotypes, ignorance, and neglect. Brown's accomplishment in this regard is difficult to overesti-

mate. As a teacher from a family of teachers, Brown understood the essential role that scholarship plays in any successful effort to gain acceptance and respect for a cultural tradition. Canons are made, fought over, expanded or contracted by the power of research and persuasion. The canon defined in *The Negro Caravan* has since grown, but it has influenced and merged with the other American canon, becoming a part of what it means to have an education in America.

Brown remained an influential poet, scholar, and teacher at Howard University for the rest of his life. Among his students were Nobel Laureate Toni Morrison, actor Ossie Davis, sociologist Kenneth B. Clarke, poet Amiri Baraka, activist Stokely Carmichael, and federal judge Spottswood G. Robinson. He collected many honors during his career, including that of being chosen Poet Laureate of Washington, DC. Sterling Brown died in 1989.

By contributing to and helping to define the canon of American

letters, he assured himself a place in that canon. He said of himself: "I am an integrationist . . . by integration, I do not mean assimilation. I believe what the word means — an integer is a whole number. I want to be in the best of American traditions. I want to be accepted as a whole man." As poet and anthologist Michael S. Harper said of him, "Sterling Brown is a trustee of consciousness, a national treasure. He will die with that hammer in his hands. His poems now belong to us all."

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*Nicollò N. Donzella is a Baltimore attorney and National Endowment for the Arts fellow. His poetry has appeared in Poetry, The New York Quarterly, and The Village Voice. His fiction has appeared in Attenzione and The Akron Review.*



# Humanities in Maryland

## From the Resource Center

### The Poetry of Sterling A. Brown Read by the Author

Records the rhythmic and musical voice of Sterling A. Brown as he reads twenty-one of his most memorable poems. Brown is one of America's enduring poets.

(CD), 52 minutes, 1995

### Edgar Allan Poe: Terror of the Soul

Reveals Poe's creative genius and personal experiences through dramatic recreations from his life and works. The film biography illustrates how Poe's prose and poetry filled with mystery and the macabre continue to frighten and inspire readers, writers, composers, artists, and poets all over the world.

(Video), 57 minutes, 1995

### The Writing Life: Roland Flint Hosts Michael S. Harper — "Celebrating Sterling Brown (1901-1989)"

Harper reads and comments on Brown's poetry.

(Video), 30 minutes, 1994

### The Writing Life: Roland Flint and Lucille Clifton

Invites the audience to share former Maryland Post Laureate Poet Lucille Clifton's discussions about her works, including "Good Times" with Roland Flint.

(Video), 30 minutes 1992

## Maryland Humanities Council Board

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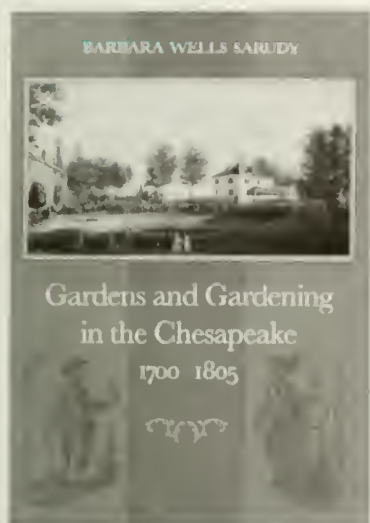
## Money Available

Nonprofit organizations and community groups are eligible to apply for grants from the Maryland Humanities Council. Staff members will help you plan programs and work on grant applications. To receive a copy of our grant guidelines, call or write the Council (the address and phone number are on the back cover) or retrieve them from the Council's homepage located at <http://www.mdhc.org>.

The Council awards two types of grants: minigrants (\$1,200 or less) and regular grants (\$1,201 to \$10,000). Minigrants should be submitted at least six weeks before your project begins; there are no set deadlines for minigrants. Regular grants should be submitted by the following deadlines for consideration in the next round:

First Draft	Final Draft	Decision Date
October 15, 1998	November 30, 1998	January 23, 1999

# New on the Maryland Bookshelf



## *Gardens and Gardening in the Chesapeake: 1700-1805*

by Barbara Wells Sarudy

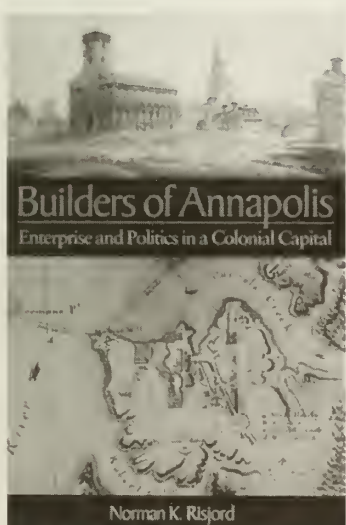
Barbara Wells Sarudy traces the development of both elite and non-elite Chesapeake gardens over the course of the eighteenth century. Using a detailed reconstruction of an Annapolis craftsman's garden as a departure point, she explores who labored in these gardens, how gardeners were supplied, and what forms these gardens followed. She concludes that Chesapeake gardeners followed forms that demonstrated order and control over nature, in a countryside where the disorder and wildness of nature were everywhere. Finally, she demonstrates how these gardens reflected emerging, uniquely American sensibilities and ideals which increasingly rejected British models and forms.

*Barbara Wells Sarudy is the Executive Director of the Maryland Humanities Council. The Council is selling her book, with the net proceeds supporting council programs. For more information, contact Stephen Hardy at 410-625-4830.*

## *Chesapeake Spring* by John W. Taylor

John W. Taylor explores the visual beauty of a Chesapeake spring. He traces the progress of the season from its beginning in the lengthening days of January, vividly capturing the contours of color and texture as life returns to the landscape. By using both color paintings and a complementary journal which renders scenes with a naturalist's insight and an artist's eye for details, Taylor produces a book that is a celebration of the Bay's wildlife.

*John W. Taylor is an award-winning painter of Chesapeake Bay wildlife and landscapes, whose works have been featured in national and regional galleries.*



## *Builders of Annapolis: Enterprise and Politics in a Colonial Capital*

by Norman K. Risjord

Norman K. Risjord chronicles the lives of various Annapolitians to construct a picture of Maryland's colonial politics, society, and culture. His biographical sketches cover powerful politicians, like Royal governor Francis Nicholson, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, and Samuel Chase, as well as artisans, like cabinet maker John Shaw and printers Jonas and Catherine Green. Together, they transformed a shoreline that looked "like a forest standing in water" into "one of the most sparkling communities in British America."

*Norman K. Risjord is Professor Emeritus at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the author of numerous books on early American history.*

## We've Moved to a New Address!

(On the Web, that is)

Hey, Armchair Surfers—surf on over to a new site. The Maryland Humanities Council has a new address on the World Wide Web. Our new URL is

[www.mdhc.org](http://www.mdhc.org)

This is just the first of many planned improvements to our web site in the coming year. Of course, we have an up-to-date calendar of humanities events on our web site, information on free programs available for your community, guidelines for our grant process, and descriptions of our merchandise. Check it out!

## Free Speakers!

The Maryland Humanities Council is pleased to present its third series of *Speakers Bureau* programs for the 1998–99 season. These 30 speakers, who are outstanding Maryland humanities scholars, are available free for presentations to civic and community groups throughout the state of Maryland. The Council pays for the scholar's honorarium and travel expenses—all the sponsoring organization must do is provide a space and an audience.

For the catalogue for this new series and for more information on this program, contact Polly Weber, 410-625-4830.



## Baltimore Book Festival

Join us for the Baltimore Book Festival—Maryland's official celebration of the literary arts. It will be held, rain or shine, on September 26 and 27 in Mount Vernon Place at the foot of the Washington Monument. The Maryland Humanities Council is a proud sponsor of this event and will have a booth offering information about the Council as well as our exciting merchandise.

There will be more than 100 exhibitors and vendors with books for sale, entertainments, contests, author signings, poetry readings, artisans, activities for kids, storytellers, griots, puppeteers, street theatre, internet exhibits, live music, local presses, giveaways, hands-on crafts, writers' groups, literary reviews, visits to cultural attractions, celebrity readers, and much more. For more information, visit [www.bop.org/bookfest](http://www.bop.org/bookfest) or call (410) 752-8632.



# Arts and Humanities Month

Baltimore is celebrating Arts and Humanities month this October. The Mayor's Advisory Committee on Art and Culture and the Maryland Humanities Council collaborate to present special programs and activities during this month—free of charge. This programming is made possible by the Maryland State Arts Council, *WHERE Baltimore* magazine, and WJZ 13.

All performances begin at noon; times for the childrens' workshops are available from 410-396-4575 or by contacting the Pratt Library directly.

- October 2 William "Mac" McClellan (musical comedy) at the Harborplace Amphitheater
- October 3 "Drawing Inspiration from Books" — a workshop focusing on literacy and the arts for children ages 5 to 15 — at branch TBA, Pratt Library
- October 7 David Ponder (harp) in the Baltimore City Hall rotunda
- October 9 Sylvia Hardison (jazz vocalist) at the Harborplace Amphitheater
- October 10 "Drawing Inspiration from Books" — a workshop focusing on literacy and the arts for children ages 5 to 15 — Forest Park Branch, Pratt Library
- October 14 Risa Carlson (guitar) in the Baltimore City Hall rotunda
- October 16 Spencer and Dexter (ventriloquism) at the Harborplace Amphitheater
- October 17 "Drawing Inspiration from Books" — a workshop focusing on literacy and the arts for children ages 5 to 15 — Broadway Branch, Pratt Library
- October 21 Alison Potter (flute) in the Baltimore City Hall rotunda



## BALTIMORE'S ARTS & HUMANITIES MONTH

- October 23 Joshua at the Harborplace Amphitheater
- October 24 "Drawing Inspiration from Books" — a workshop focusing on literacy and the arts for children ages 5 to 15 — at branch TBA, Pratt Library
- October 28 Fox-Moeller (cello and guitar duo) in the Baltimore City Hall rotunda
- October 30 Blue Smoke Blues Band (blues) at the Harborplace Amphitheater

## Calendar of Humanities Events

### Exhibits

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Through November 29      **Bridges to Zion: The People of Maryland and the Land of Israel**

Exhibit examines the relationships between Maryland and Israel, and how these relationships have grown and changed over the past half century.

Location: Jewish Museum of Maryland, Baltimore

Contact: Barry Kessler, 410-732-6400

Sponsor: Jewish Museum of Maryland

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**Park Heights: Lives Along an Avenue**

Exhibit displays photographic portraits from the diverse communities living along Baltimore's Park Heights Avenue, with public programs to explore themes in the exhibit.

September 2–November 30      Location: Exhibit at the Jewish Community Center, Baltimore

September–November      Location: Public programs at the Jewish Community Center and other locations

Contact: Amy Bernstein, 410-466-1292

Sponsor: University of Baltimore

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Through April 1999      **Something Extra: Traditional Decorative Carvings on Chesapeake Bay Work Boats**

Exhibit examines the important role that decorative boat carvings have played in the lives of the watermen who use them and the craftsmen who created them.

Location: Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, St. Michael's

Contact: Peter Leshner, 410-745-2916

Sponsor: Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum

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Through February 2000      **Colonial Capitals of the Chesapeake: Jamestown and St. Mary's City**

Exhibit traces the evolution of two seventeenth-century colonial capitals, St. Mary's City and Jamestown, revealing their similarities and differences, and assessing the impact of political, economic, and social forces of the day.

Location: Exhibit Gallery at Historic St. Mary's City Visitors Center

Contact: Silas Hurry, 301-373-2280

Sponsor: St. Mary's City Foundation

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### Programs

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Through December 1998      **Exploring Venezuela: An Extended Classroom Experience**

Social studies students explore the people and culture of Venezuela through regular communication with a teacher who is spending a year teaching English in Merida, Venezuela.

Location: Northern Middle School, Owings Mills, Maryland and Merida, Venezuela

Contact: Richard Harris, 410-257-1622

Sponsor: Northern Middle School

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**September**      **Sotterley's Interpretive Walking Trail**

Trail illuminates three centuries of Maryland Tidewater history at Sotterley Plantation in Southern Maryland with a series of brochures which highlight the grounds, outbuildings, slave cabin, and manor house and introduce visitors to themes such as archaeological findings, trade in the colonial period, African-American history at the site, and agriculture and education at Sotterley.

Location: Sotterley Plantation, Hollywood  
 Contact: *Judith O'Brien, 301-373-2280*  
 Sponsor: Sotterley Foundation

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**September 1**      **Driving Tour Brochure, Historic Sites Consortium of Queen Anne's County**

Brochure guides visitors and local residents to the many historic sites and cultural resources of Queen Anne's County. This publication will be available free from visitor centers and local historic sites and businesses.

Location: Various Queen Anne's County sites  
 Contact: *Elizabeth Aiello Seidel, 410-604-2100*  
 Sponsor: Historic Sites Consortium of Queen Anne's County

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**September 2, 9 & 16**      **Democracy in America Reading/ Discussion Program**

12:00-2:00 PM

Readings features excerpts from Alexis de Tocqueville's writings on American democracy, as well as commentaries on Tocqueville's themes by nineteenth-century figures and contemporary scholars.

Location: Queen Anne's County Public Library, Kent Island Branch  
 Contact: *Pat Bates, 410-313-7750*  
 Sponsor: Maryland Humanities Council

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**September 8, 15 & 22**      **Democracy in America Reading/ Discussion Program**

1:00-2:30 PM

Readings features excerpts from Alexis de Tocqueville's writings on American democracy, as well as commentaries on Tocqueville's themes by nineteenth-century figures and contemporary scholars.

Location: Howard County Detention Center, Jessup  
 Contact: *Pat Bates, 410-313-7750*  
 Sponsor: Maryland Humanities Council

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September  
10, 17 & 24  
7:00–9:00 PM

**Democracy in America Reading/  
Discussion Program**

Readings features excerpts from Alexis de Tocqueville's writings on American democracy, as well as commentaries on Tocqueville's themes by nineteenth-century figures and contemporary scholars.

Location: Calvert County Public Library,  
Prince Frederick Branch

Contact: *Pat Bates, 410-313-7750*

Sponsor: Maryland Humanities Council

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September  
10, 17 & 24  
2:00–3:30 PM

**Democracy in America Reading/  
Discussion Program**

Readings features excerpts from Alexis de Tocqueville's writings on American democracy, as well as commentaries on Tocqueville's themes by nineteenth-century figures and contemporary scholars.

Location: Holiday Park Senior Center,  
Wheaton

Contact: *Pat Bates, 410-313-7750*

Sponsor: Maryland Humanities Council

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September  
15, 22 & 19  
12:00–1:00 PM

**Democracy in America Reading/  
Discussion Program**

Readings features excerpts from Alexis de Tocqueville's writings on American democracy, as well as commentaries on Tocqueville's themes by nineteenth century figures and contemporary scholars.

Location: Social Security Administration,  
Baltimore

Contact: *Pat Bates, 410-313-7750*

Sponsor: Maryland Humanities Council

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September  
13 and 27 &  
October 11  
1:00–3:00 PM

**Democracy in America Reading/  
Discussion Program**

Readings features excerpts from Alexis de Tocqueville's writings on American democracy, as well as commentaries on Tocqueville's themes by nineteenth-century figures and contemporary scholars.

Location: Federal Correction Institution,  
Cumberland

Contact: *Suzanne Cawley, 301-784-1000  
x2046*

Sponsor: Maryland Humanities Council

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September 16  
7:00 PM

**Bosnia: An Exploration of Cultural  
Myths and Cultural Realities**

Lecture by Dr. George Scheper explores the history and culture of Bosnia in relation to its immediate neighbors: Serbia, Croatia, and the other republics of the former Yugoslavia. Bosnia had long been the most multicultural country in Europe, and its rich heritage is illustrated through examples of its art and literature.

Location: Fairhaven Library, Sykesville

Contact: *Marti Ellerbrock, 410-795-8800  
X3628*

Sponsor: Maryland Humanities Council

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September 16,  
November 21  
6:00 PM

**Lecture Series: Discovery of the Electron**

Lecture celebrates the 100th anniversary of the discovery of the electron by J. J. Thomson in October 1897 by examining the history of the electron and its impact on science and society.

Location: Historical Electronics Museum,  
Linthicum

Contact: *Michael Cross, 410-765-3110*

Sponsor: Historical Electronics Museum

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September 17     **How To Search for Your Roots**  
12:30 PM

Program by Ms. Agnes Kane Callum escorts the audience through the methodology and documentation of family research through a discussion of genealogical sources such as military, cemetery, church and parish records; marriage and death certificates; Federal and state archives; genealogical and historical societies; and Bibles.

Location: Rising Sun Banquet Hall  
Contact: *Judith Pugh, 410-996-5280*  
Sponsor: Maryland Humanities Council

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**1998 Sharpsburg Heritage Festival**

Festival commemorates the Civil War battle of Antietam with a lecture series, walking and bus tours, a dramatic interpretation of the lives of mid-nineteenth-century women, and a quilt exhibit.

September     Location: Lectures at Sharpsburg Town  
17-20             Hall and Antietam National  
                       Battlefield

September     Location: Walking tours in Sharpsburg; bus  
18-20             tours in Sharpsburg and  
                       Antietam National Battlefield

September 20     Location: Dramatic Interpretation, "Quilt  
11:00 AM             Voices" in Sharpsburg

September 20     Location: Quilt exhibit at the Sharpsburg  
10:00 AM-             Emergency Medical Services  
5:00 PM             Building Community Hall

Contact: *Pat Holland, 301-432-7707*  
Sponsor: Sharpsburg Heritage Festival,  
Town of Sharpsburg

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September 19     **A Fiery Passage: Children and**  
11:00 AM             **Adolescents in the Civil War**

Lecture by Dr. Peter Bardaglio investigates the distinctive meaning of what children and adolescents, black and white, in the North and South, experienced and felt during the Civil War by drawing on diaries, correspondence, newspapers, memoirs, Freedmen's Bureau documents, and ex-slave narratives.

Location: St. Paul's Episcopal Church,  
Sharpsburg  
Contact: *Dick Hynson, 301-432-4762*  
Sponsor: Maryland Humanities Council

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September 19     **Mercy Amidst the Mischief and Misery:**  
3:00 PM             **The True Story of Civil War Medicine**

Lecture by Mr. Burton Kummerow explores how the Civil War changed the lives of tens of thousands of military and civilian men and women from the North and South, who faced the emergency with skill and determination, and set medicine on a path to the modern era.

Location: Emergency Medical Services  
Building, Sharpsburg  
Contact: *Pat Holland, 301-432-7707*  
Sponsor: Maryland Humanities Council

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September 25     **Myth as Mirror of Society**  
1:00 PM

Lecture by Dr. Marianne Strong illustrates how myth often operates as a blueprint for members of a society. She uses *The Odyssey* and *The Iliad* to examine the emergence of the new Athens: democratic, intellectual, and scientific.

Location: Greenbelt Community Center/  
Senior Center  
Contact: *Karen Haseley, 301-397-2208*  
Sponsor: Maryland Humanities Council

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September  
26-27

**Re: Visionary, Link #3**

Articles focus on the American Visionary Arts Museum in the critical journal, LINK. Scholars and critics explore the meaning of "visionary art" and examine the roles and responsibilities of art institutions.

Location: Baltimore Book Festival  
Contact: *Peter Walsh, 410-243-8552*  
Sponsor: Tropos Press, Inc.

October  
7, 14 & 21  
2:00-3:30 PM

**Democracy in America Reading/  
Discussion Program**

Readings features excerpts from Alexis de Tocqueville's writings on American democracy, as well as commentaries on Tocqueville's themes by nineteenth-century figures and contemporary scholars.

Location: Worcester County Public Library, Ocean City Branch  
Contact: *Pat Bates, 410-313-7750*  
Sponsor: Maryland Humanities Council

September 26,  
October 3, 17,  
and 24  
9:00 AM

**African Americans in Business: The  
Path Towards Empowerment**

High school teachers' seminar focuses on the 1998 Black History theme "African Americans in Business: The Path Towards Empowerment." The seminar includes lectures by historians and discussions about how to use the Black History Month resource kit in the classroom.

Location: Coppin State College, Baltimore  
Contact: *Larry Martin, 410-265-6043*  
Sponsor: Coppin State College

October 8 &  
November 12  
7:30 PM

**Maryland History Educational Programs  
of Friends of HAF**

Monthly lectures and walking tours examine aspects of Maryland history such as historic architecture in Annapolis and St. Michael's, and the history of the Whitbread race.

Location: William Paca House and Garden, Annapolis  
Contact: *Sabrina Linton, 410-263-5553*  
Sponsor: Historic Annapolis Foundation, Inc.

October 2-3

**Third Annual F. Scott Fitzgerald Literary  
Conference**

Conference celebrates Fitzgerald's associations with Rockville and honors and encourages literary achievement in Maryland by conducting workshops on writing and by presenting short story contest prizes.

Location: Montgomery College, Rockville  
Contact: *John Moser, 301-762-0096*  
Sponsor: Peerless Rockville Historic Preservation, Ltd.

**Environmental Ethics in an Age of  
Global Concern**

Lecture by Dr. Paul Wapner demonstrates that environmental issues are not simply about how humans treat nature but also about how they treat one another by describing how people tend to displace environmental problems rather than solve them. His lecture encourages participants to reflect upon biocentric and anthropocentric thinking, and to discuss the ethical dimensions of environmental displacement.

October 21  
Noon

Location: McGowan, Capitol College,  
Laurel

Contact: *Sara Hanna, 301-369-2800 X3028*

October 28  
1:00 PM

Location: Fergie's Waterfront Restaurant,  
Edgewater

Contact: *Dorothy Collins, 410-263-9041*  
Sponsor: Maryland Humanities Council



November 12  
& 19 and  
December 4

**African-American Culture:  
Transcending the Harlem Renaissance**

Slide presentation, film screenings, gallery talks, and visits with contemporary artists explore the artistic traditions that contribute to a vital African-American presence in literature, drama, music, and art. These programs will provide a cultural context for the exhibition "Nurturing the Future: The Art and Collection of David C. Driskell."

Location: Center for Renaissance and Baroque Studies, University of Maryland, College Park

Contact: Adele Seeff, 301-405-6830

Sponsor: Center for Renaissance and Baroque Studies, University of Maryland

**Magnificent Shoulders: The First All African-American Medical School Faculty**

Documentary chronicles the formation of the first African-American medical school faculty at Howard University during the 1930s and examines the impact that early twentieth-century medical reforms had on the health care of blacks

Contact: Carol Slocum, 301-434-6371

Sponsor: Sisters Empowered To Promote Interest and Opportunities in the Arts

**Long-time Alley House Residents of East Baltimore  
— An Oral History Project**

Oral History: Examines racial change in a working class neighborhood of historic alley houses in East Baltimore — from Bohemian and Polish immigrants who lived in there in the 1890s, to African-American residents who moved into the area after World War II. The tapes will form the basis for a future exhibit at the Great Blacks in Wax Museum.

Location: Community archives and library, Great Blacks in Wax Museum, Baltimore

Contact: Mary Ellen Hayward, 410-321-7612

Sponsor: Baltimore Heritage, Inc.

## Programs Coming Soon

**Cry Out! A Portrait of Hildegard of Bingen**

Documentary explores the life of Hildegard von Bingen (1098–1179) — composer, dramatist, theologian, and physician — who is considered today one of the great geniuses of the Middle Ages.

Location: Editing and post-production in the United States and Europe

Contact: Jo Francis, 301-422-8176

Sponsor: Flare Productions, Inc

**Illegal Drugs in America: A History**

Documentary traces the history of illegal drugs in America from the late nineteenth century to the mid-1980s. The film will explore how various drugs first came into use in our society, who has been most harmed by drug use, and how drug laws have evolved over time.

Location: Baltimore

Contact: Jill Jonnes, 410-243-5417

Sponsor: Association of Maryland Area Media Artists, Inc.



# Maryland Revisited

When you're planning that special outing, isn't one of your first thoughts, "Oh my goodness, which hat shall I wear?" Not hardly, eh? Well, apparently your chapeau was a major consideration in years gone by, if these photos are any indication. Consider the photo at bottom left, whimsically captioned "Justinian, this atones for everything." Is it the coming night on the town to which the lady refers — or did her top-hatted companion just present her with that fetching bonnet? We shall let our readers ponder this and other heady matters. *All photographs courtesy of the Maryland Historical Society.*



*Group portrait taken on the Old Franklin Road, March 1901.*



*Portrait of members the Maryland Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution taken at Washington Cathedral.*



*This pose by members of a theatrical troupe is titled "A Night Off."*

*Correction: In our last issue, the picture of two girls holding the American flags on the upper right hand side of this page was incorrectly identified. The photograph is from the McFee Collection at the Maryland Historical Society, and is catalog number PP32.261. We regret the error and thank the society for calling this to our attention.*



# Maryland's Best Kept Humanities Secrets

## Star-Spangled Banner Flag House and Museum

### The Star-Spangled Banner Flag House

844 East Pratt Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202  
410-837-1793

[www.flaghouse.org](http://www.flaghouse.org)

Executive Director: Sally Johnston

Open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 AM – 4 PM

Admission:

Adults \$4

Seniors \$3

Children \$2



The Star-Spangled Banner Flag House was the home of Mary Young Pickersgill who hand sewed the flag that flew over Fort McHenry during the Battle of Baltimore and inspired Francis Scott Key to write his famous poem. Mary Pickersgill came to live in this house in 1807. Also with her were her mother, Rebecca Flower Young, a flag maker during the Revolutionary War, and her daughter, Caroline Pickersgill, Mary's only surviving child. These three women partially supported themselves by producing flags for the many ships entering and leaving the busy port of Baltimore.

Mary Pickersgill made the Star-Spangled Banner in this house during the summer of 1813. She received \$405.90 for her efforts from the commander of Fort McHenry, and this receipt is in the collections of the Flag House. She resided here, in her Pratt Street home, until her death in 1857.

The Star-Spangled Banner Flag House celebrated its 70th anniversary in 1997. Visitors enjoy a tour of Mary Pickersgill home and a visit to the 1812 Museum which has both a video program and exhibits on the War of 1812. The museum grounds feature an award winning garden and a unique stone map of the United States with each state cut from its native stone.





# An Interview with Taunya Lovell Banks

By Barbara Wells Sarudy



*Taunya Lovell Banks is the Jacob A. France Professor of Equality Jurisprudence at the University of Maryland Law School in Baltimore. She earned a B.A. in Political Science from Syracuse University and a J.D. from Howard University. A native of the Washington area, she worked in Mississippi in the late 1960s both in public voter education and on legal civil rights cases. Since then, she has held both governmental and academic positions dealing with the law and equality. She has also published numerous law journal articles focusing on racial, gender, and disability issues in the United States legal system. She has served as a member of the board of the Maryland Humanities Council since 1993, and has served on its Executive Committee and as its vice president.*

*What is your earliest memory of being intrigued by some subject in the humanities?*

When I was three my father brought me Prokofiev's symphonic children's tale, *Peter and the Wolf*. I loved the music and story, crying at the end when I heard the oboe's plaintive wail signifying the duck in the wolf's belly. For years, however, I was terrified whenever I heard the horns that represented the wolf, as I hid behind the livingroom couch. I still have that album, and have purchased newer versions of the recording for the young children of friends and relatives.

*Who or what inspired you to become involved in the humanities?*

My parents, especially my father, a Professor of English at Howard University, inspired me to become involved in the humanities. When I was a child, my father frequently took me to see plays in New York City which probably accounts for my love of drama. In high school I briefly entertained the thought of running away to New York to work in the theater. I probably would have starved. Today I enjoy being part of the audience and hold season tickets to both the Center Stage in Baltimore and the Arena Stage in Washington. I frequent other local theaters as well.

Both of my parents also were avid readers and our house was filled with books which I always was free to read. Today my house too overflows with books. I passed this love of reading and literature onto my two children. Like their mother, they hold on to their books, and my basement is the current guardian for these books.

*What is the most important thing you have learned from the humanities?*

Learning never stops, and continuous learning stimulates and facilitates personal growth.

*What is the most exciting thing that has happened to you involving the humanities?*

It is hard to pick a single thing or event in my life, so I will mention several exciting things that have

happened to me since I arrived in Baltimore. While in Baltimore I've met several people, like historian Lois Green Carr, author Gloria Naylor, and playwright August Wilson, whom I've long admired. My excitement at being able to put a face with wonderful or inspiring words I've read or heard always amazes me. I am constantly in awe of creative people.

Although I have appeared on television in my professional capacity several times, I was extremely excited to appear as an extra on an episode of the Baltimore-based television show *Homicide* that featured Harold Dutton. I am a hard-core *Homicide* fan. This experience, however, confirmed for me that I am a better audience than actor. Being an extra means standing around doing nothing a long time, or doing the same scene over and over—for little pay. Thus, it takes real love of the medium to stick with it.

*How does your knowledge of the Humanities affect your day-to-day life?*

The humanities often are better illustrations of life than the cases in the law textbooks. I often tell my students that lawyers are really

more counselors than advocates, and it takes a humanist to be a good counselor. Unfortunately, there is a dehumanizing aspect to legal education that affects both student and teacher. We tend to abstract facts—even over relying on terms like plaintiff and defendant—often erasing the human elements from the cases. John T. Noonan discusses this point in a wonderful book entitled *Persons and Masks of the Law* (1976). I used his essay on a famous tort case, *Palsgraf v. Long Island Railway*, to get my students to think more about the plaintiff in that case, Mrs. Palsgraf, when assessing Judge Cardozo's written opinion.

Literature, theater, and film also reflect the society in which we live. I recently wrote a law review article using a film as the basis for a discussion of law and legal theories about racial formation. In fact, there are a number of legal academics who are writing about the connection between film and law—how law is represented in film and public perceptions of the law.

*Do the humanities help you deal with the human inevitability of living, growing older, and then dying?*

I think the answer to this question is an unqualified yes. This question reminds me of Ernest Gaines' novel, *A Lesson before Dying*, and Sherman Alexie's movie, *Smoke Signals*. (I also am an avid moviegoer.) Both the novel and film advance the notion that living, and growing older, entail accepting responsibility for things we would rather not; forgiving ourselves and others for mistakes and shortcomings; and not waiting until we think death is near to say and do what needs to be done for ourselves and others. I try, although not consistently enough, to remember and do these things, because you never know when you will meet death.

# Summer's over and it's time to get busy.

*Actually, we have been busy...*

*And it was a good summer for us here at the council. During the Fourth of July holidays we presented our 4th annual free Chautauqua in a tent under the stars at Deep Creek Lake and nearly 300 people turned up each evening for five consecutive nights to meet scholars portraying Will Rogers, Mark Twain, Langston Hughes, Dorothy Parker, and James Thurber. And our free Baltimore-based Family Matters program which brings at-risk families together to read and discuss ideas in housing projects, police athletic clubs, and transitional shelters is also thriving.*



*Now it is time to bring these programs, and many others, to more people across the state. To do this we desperately need your help. Soon you will be receiving our annual fund-raising letter. Please respond so that the humanities can have a continuing impact in Maryland.*

*The humanities are the stories and ideas that help us decide what's important in our lives and make sense of our world. They help us gain tolerance by examining the beliefs and values of others. They give us a sense of history and a vision for tomorrow.*

## Maryland HUMANITIES

**Maryland Humanities Council**  
601 North Howard Street  
Baltimore, MD 21201-4585  
(410) 625-4830  
[www.mdhc.org](http://www.mdhc.org)

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*Maryland*

# HUMANITIES



Visions of Community —  
Town Planning in Maryland

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# *To Our Readers*

Over the past quarter century, historians, archaeologists, sociologists, and others of their ilk have closely examined the environments Marylanders created to live in: domestic interiors, housing exteriors, and surrounding communities. Studies of these human-produced structures have provided a wealth of knowledge and insight not only about society and the changes taking place within it but also about the designers' success in achieving their goals.

In domestic interiors, the emergence of individual dishes, serving utensils, and beds for people on all levels of society in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries reflected the increased Enlightenment emphasis on the importance of the individual. And the greater use of individual rooms during this same period has led to deeper understanding about the evolving concept of privacy in the early modern world.

Housing exteriors have also changed significantly over the past 350 years. As with everything subject to fashion, styles have come and gone. But, some features which were incorporated into many styles, such as front porches, have virtually disappeared; they have been replaced by back yard decks, pools, and large fenced areas. This change over the course of the twentieth century has accompanied the increasing emphasis on the importance of family life and the lessening emphasis on the integration with community life.

Finally, people often arranged their communities, and the elements within those communities, to express ideas about the structure of their societies. There are many communities in Maryland which were planned with specific goals in mind. Mill villages—such as Savage in Howard County—often placed the manager's house in a prominent point and reinforced the social order with a hierarchy of housing descending from that point. Roland Park in Baltimore City was designed by Frederick Law Olmsted's firm to remind its residents of the countryside, while still being located very close to the city. James Rouse's Columbia in Howard County sought to create a new type of suburban town which encouraged both neighborhood identity and religious and racial toleration. And, more recently, Kentlands in Montgomery County attempted to recreate a sense of community with techniques from the past: the inclusion of front porches, the construction of sidewalks on all streets, and the elimination of the pervasive suburban cul-de-sac. While these and many other planned communities in Maryland deserve to be noticed, this issue explores three examples of town planning from Maryland's past.

The first, St. Mary's City, was unique because it was the first Baroque city in the English-speaking world, yet it was on the far margins of seventeenth-century "civilization." The Proprietor's agents sought to create a city to impress: it was a display of governmental power in a colony that had endured severe political and economic turmoil. But it was also a statement about religion. The Jesuit chapel was large and impressive, displaying Lord Baltimore's support for the Roman Catholic religion, but it was at the opposite end of the city from the Statehouse, equally displaying his support for toleration and separation.

The second, Greenbelt, was built during the Great Depression. It incorporated many of the town planning principles of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which attempted to counteract not only the urban decay and overcrowded housing resulting from industrialization and immigration but also the suburban sprawl and class separation encouraged by streetcars and automobiles. To these new ideas, Greenbelt added a new element: economic cooperation. The founding of a cooperative gas station, grocery store, pharmacy, movie theater, and newspaper—some of which still survive and function today—has given Greenbelt a unique sense of community as it has dealt with challenges during the past sixty years.

The final example consists of two communities built during World War II: one for whites and one for blacks, reflecting the segregation of the times. Baltimore experienced a twenty-five percent increase in population during the war, and places were needed to house the new factory workers migrating to the city. While both Middle River and Cherry Hill were created to fill this need, their design was more than just functional: they both incorporated many of the "garden city" ideas of Greenbelt and other developments. And, in the case of Middle River, the use of prefabricated "Cemesto" housing greatly reduced construction costs. Both of these areas continue to maintain strong community identities and active civic organizations.

We would like to thank the authors of the articles for their part in bringing this interesting part of Maryland's past to light. We would also like to thank Katie Scott-Childress of the Greenbelt Museum and Jay McCullough of the Housing Authority of Baltimore City for their assistance in providing photographs. We hope you enjoy the issue.

*Barbara Wells Sarudy*  
*Executive Director*

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## Maryland HUMANITIES

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*Cover Photograph: Families relax in front of a "Cemesto" house in Middle River. These "Cemesto" houses were built by the Glenn L. Martin Aviation Company to house factory workers during World War II. Courtesy of the Maryland Historical Society.*



# St. Mary's City: A Baroque City in the Wilderness

By Henry M. Miller

Among the cultural baggage that Maryland's first English colonists carried was the idea that people should establish and inhabit towns and cities. Indeed, this was an integral part of English efforts to settle "new" lands, whether in Ireland or America. The communities they created were typically either unplanned towns which grew by chance and expediency or grid plan cities whose streets intersected each other at right angles. Archaeological research and documentary information provide strong evidence that Maryland's first city followed neither of these patterns. Instead, it displayed a unique arrangement based on sophisticated ideas about urban layout. Planned in the mid-1660s, St. Mary's City was the first city in the English-speaking world which fully employed Baroque principles in its design.

Lord Baltimore's instructions to the settlers on the *Ark* and the *Dove* called for establishing a town in the new colony. They were to select a suitable place "to seate a towne" and "to cause streetes to be marked out where they intend to place the towne and to oblige every man to buyld one by an other." Whether or not the early colonists followed these instructions at St. Mary's City is unknown, but most settlers had decided by 1637 to dwell on their own plantations, growing tobacco for their livelihood.

What little town growth that occurred during the first decade of Maryland's settlement came to a sudden end in 1645. In that year, Richard Ingle attacked St. Mary's City and nearly destroyed the colony. For the next decade, turmoil and uncer-

tainty continued and virtually all development ceased. Only with the restoration of Charles II to the throne of England in 1660 did the colony regain political stability and resume significant expansion.

As the seat of provincial government, St. Mary's City experienced considerable growth from the 1660s until the capital was moved to Annapolis in 1695. But what type of settlement was it? This is difficult to answer because St. Mary's is truly a "Lost City." No original buildings stand. No maps survive. Fire and negligence destroyed most of the city's records. Detailed descriptions of the city are non-existent. In fact, by the time of the American Revolution, the first capital of Maryland had largely disappeared from both landscape and memory.

Historian Lois Green Carr meticulously assembled every historical clue which has survived about St. Mary's. These revealed that there was never a large population in the town and implied that Maryland's capital was a scattered, unplanned community. However, Carr realized the inconclusive nature of the historical evidence and noted that archaeology would be essential to determine the true nature of the city's plan.

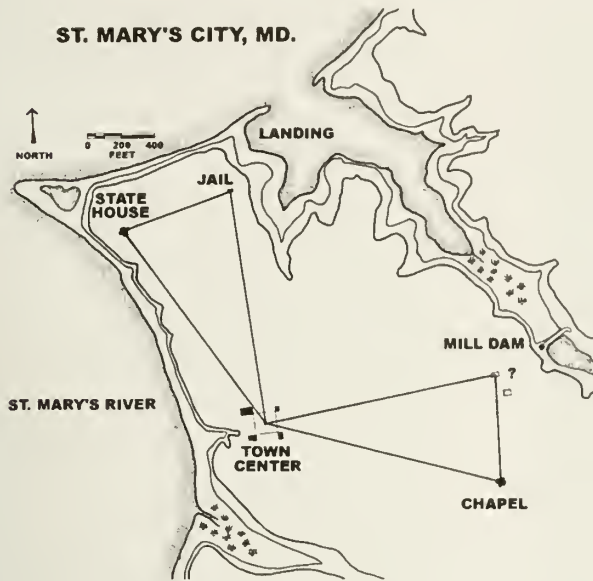
For the last three decades, this archaeological research has been conducted at St. Mary's City, although earlier, important work had been conducted by H. Chandlee Forman, a pioneer in the field of architectural history. Using a wide range of data—including historical information, architectural remains, fence ditches, computer-generated artifact maps, and aerial photo-

graphs—the plan of the city that the early Maryland colonists created has emerged from the mists of the past. A preliminary map of the city was created in 1986, and it has been continually revised and improved with new information. Careful analysis of the map locations of the buildings, roads, and other elements of the former city yielded a new vision of St. Mary's which was contrary to the initial hypothesis of a haphazardly arranged settlement.

One of the new discoveries was that the four principal buildings in the center of the town were arranged to form an almost perfect square. Here, the four major roads of the town intersected. More intriguing was the fact that the 1667 brick Jesuit Chapel and the 1676 Statehouse were the same distance from the town square, both measuring approximately 1400 feet from its center point. Maryland's first brick Jail, built in 1676, was also a significant structure in the fledg-



*Artist's conception of the Jesuit Chapel in St. Mary's City. This drawing is based on extensive archaeological and historical research. Courtesy of Historic St. Mary's City.*



*Reconstructed map of Jerome White's plan for St. Mary's City. Courtesy of Historic St. Mary's City.*



*Actual layout of St. Mary's streets. Courtesy of Historic St. Mary's City.*

ling capital, and excavations revealed its exact location in the early 1990s. While modern road construction destroyed most of the seventeenth-century Jail site, traces of this building indicate that it also stood approximately 1400 feet from the center of the town square. Hence, three major brick structures were all located the same distance from the center of St. Mary's City. An analysis of surface artifact distributions from the eastern side of the city showed that a fourth building utilizing brick in its architecture was located between 1375 and 1450 feet from the square. Not yet excavated, the identity of this structure remains a mystery. It is especially notable that at least three, and possibly all four, of the structures located approximately 1400 feet from the town center were brick structures, and we know three of these were prominent pieces of public architecture. This is important because the vast majority of buildings in the provincial capital, and indeed throughout seventeenth-century Maryland, were of wooden construction. Brick was rarely used and only one other all-brick building is known in St. Mary's—the impressive mansion of Chancellor Philip Calvert.

Lines drawn between the town's center square and these four structures form two isosceles triangles—triangles with two equal sides. Further, the corresponding angles—the angle joining the two equidistant sides—are nearly identical. Such symmetry is remarkable and not what one would expect in an unplanned settlement.

This purposeful plan is confirmed by further evidence: the actual street system of the city. The major streets in St. Mary's were focused on these prominent, public, brick buildings, as demonstrated by historical references, archaeology, and aerial photographs. Aldermanbury Street led from the square to the Statehouse; Middle Street ran to the Jail and then on to the main boat landing for the city; North Street connected the Statehouse and the Jail; the Mill Road ran from the square to the unidentified brick structure and was the main land entrance into the city; and the Chapel Road led to the Jesuit Chapel. These streets followed precisely or very closely the lines forming the double triangle. The major deviation is in Aldermanbury Street. It started in the town's center square, but had

to curve to miss the corner of the Country's or Calvert House—which had been standing since the 1630s; however, it then ran straight to the Statehouse. The colonists built private homes and other structures along these streets, providing further verification of their existence and routes. These findings conclusively demonstrate that the double triangular plan did physically exist. The multiple regularities in distances, the overall symmetry, the inclusion of major public structures, and the geometric arrangements together comprise a powerful body of evidence proving that St. Mary's City had a formal urban plan.

While other early colonial cities have haphazard arrangements or grid plans, St. Mary's urban design was dramatically different. It emphasized order and symmetry, incorporated geometric forms such as squares and triangles, and underscored the symbolic importance of the public buildings by making them the focus of the street system. These are the key elements of Baroque urban planning, the most sophisticated in the seventeenth-century world. Emerging from the Italian Renaissance, Baroque designers in the





*Recreated aerial view of St. Mary's City, circa 1685, by Walter Crowe.*

sixteenth and seventeenth centuries viewed the city not as a collection of disparate parts but as an integrated whole. By employing concepts of geometry, regularity, and visual perspective with symbolically important locations and buildings, they sought to intentionally shape physical space and architecture to express ideas and reinforce the social order. Because such design methods can create impressive, even monumental, urban settings, they were well suited for capital cities, where display and public symbolism are of much importance. Baroque concepts were used to improve or plan capitals such as Rome and Paris, and later, Washington, DC.

While widely employed on the Continent, these concepts were slow to reach England; the first major proposal for their use came after the Great Fire of London in 1666. Sir Christopher Wren and Sir John Evelyn proposed Baroque inspired designs, but neither plan could be fully implemented due to land owner opposition and property purchase expense. Nevertheless, some improvements from their plans were made, including one of the most

important urban elements to emerge from the Renaissance: squares, or *piazas*, such as those established in the London suburbs of Bloomsbury and St. James's. In major English towns, the first tentative applications of Baroque ideas were small squares laid out in Whitehaven in the late 1680s and in Warwick after a 1694 fire. Prior to the discoveries at St. Mary's City, the first full-scale use of Baroque town planning by English peoples was thought to be Francis Nicholson's plan for Annapolis in 1695.

The designer of St. Mary's plan must have conceived his idea around 1666—some thirty years prior to the creation of Annapolis—as the Jesuit Chapel and the second of the four structures in the town's center square were under construction in 1667. The third building in the center square of the town was erected in 1670 and the fourth in 1674. The following year, construction on the Statehouse and Jail began, and both were completed in 1676. Thus, it took a decade to complete the key elements in the plan, a rather rapid pace for development projects in the seventeenth century.

A Baroque urban plan for Maryland's

capital city, at a time when it was just being proposed in England, was unexpected and represented a significant advance in English urban design. But why were these new concepts first employed in frontier Maryland? Lord Baltimore officially incorporated his Maryland capital in 1668, and the composition of its governing council suggests an answer. Baltimore appointed a remarkable group of individuals to govern and develop the city, led by Chancellor Philip Calvert as mayor. The other members were William Calvert, Mark Cordea, Thomas Cosden, Daniel Jenifer, John Moorecroft, Garrett van Sweringen, and Jerome White. This group had exceptionally diverse educations: only three of the eight were schooled in England, while the other five were schooled or traveled on the Continent where they were certainly exposed to Renaissance concepts and Baroque architecture. Philip Calvert received a classical education in Lisbon; William Calvert was apparently schooled in Flanders; and Jerome White grew up and was educated in Rome. Cordea was of French origin, while van Sweringen came from the Netherlands. It is unlikely that any other English colony had individuals with such Continental educations and experiences running a city. Given the chance to create a new city on the minimally developed lands of St. Mary's, they utilized the latest ideas to create an impressive capital for the young colony.

Jerome White was the most important of these individuals for the plan of St. Mary's. He was the son of English Catholic parents who had fled England during the Civil Wars to settle in Rome. White, raised and educated in Rome, worked in Italy prior to being sent to Maryland in 1662 by Lord Baltimore. Here, he served as the Surveyor General until 1670, when he was recalled to England. No other person in English America during the seventeenth century had such direct and prolonged experience with Italian



Baroque concepts. As the Surveyor General, White also had the responsibility, the tools, and the knowledge to lay out a new capital city. Jerome White was the central figure in the creation of this innovative city design.

While the presence of White and the other Continentally-educated men on the St. Mary's City council offers an explanation for its Baroque town plan, it does not explain why Maryland had attracted such a group of people in the first place. They came to Maryland because Cecil Calvert, Lord Baltimore, ruled the proprietary government and placed members of his family and friends—many of them also Catholics—in important positions. Additionally, Maryland Catholics were allowed to openly worship without fear of persecution. The children of Catholic gentry and nobility had educations that differed from other Englishmen in their classes. Because Catholics were forbidden to vote or hold public office and were persecuted in other ways, they often sent their sons to the Continent for an education. There, students were taught to look to Rome for spiritual guidance and to the Catholic countries of Europe for intellectual inspiration. The education and associated experiences had a significant and undeniable effect upon their lives and their outlooks.

Lord Baltimore had hoped to create a new colony where religion would not be a source of hatred or violence. For this reason, he ordered the settlers in Maryland to practice tolerance of religious differences among Christians and for religion to be separated from government. The design of the capital city was also influenced by these ideals. By placing the Jesuit Chapel at one node of the street plan, the Catholic faith of the proprietor and his family was made clear to all viewers. At the same time, placing the Statehouse at the opposite end of the town but in a directly comparable position expressed the symbolic separation of State from Church then practiced in Maryland.



*The reconstructed Statehouse, currently standing in St. Mary's City.  
Courtesy of Historic St. Mary's City.*

Such a metaphorical statement was a primary purpose of Baroque concepts of town planning.

When Lord Baltimore lost political power after the Revolution of 1689, a new royal government established the Anglican faith as the official church of Maryland. When Francis Nicholson designed Maryland's new capital of Annapolis, he placed the Statehouse and Church side by side, in circles at the top of a hill, with streets radiating out from these twin points of temporal and spiritual power. He had also used Baroque methods to express new orders and relationships in colonial Maryland.

St. Mary's City, Maryland's first capital, was not haphazardly laid out but displayed a unique arrangement based upon the most sophisticated ideas about urban design in the seventeenth century. Although largely abandoned after 1695, the physical traces of this colonial effort in urban planning, and the powerful ideas behind it, remained hidden beneath the fields of southern St. Mary's County. These traces reveal that Maryland was truly in the forefront of town planning in seventeenth-century America.



Henry M. Miller is the Director of Research for Historic St. Mary's City in southern Maryland. He received his PhD in Anthropology from Michigan State University, with a specialization in Historic Archaeology. His research interests range from colonial diet to colonial Chesapeake architecture, with a special interest in the use of archaeological evidence to understand environmental changes in the Chesapeake.

# Greenbelt: A New Deal Remnant in Our Midst

By Cathy D. Knepper

The town of Greenbelt displays its ideals on the facade of its community center for all to see. The preamble to the United States Constitution, in the form of an art deco frieze by sculptor Lenore Thomas, illustrates "We the people," "in order to form a more perfect union," "establish justice," "insure domestic tranquility," "provide for the common defense," and "promote the general welfare." These goals, boldly proclaimed by the United States, also set forth the hopes of those planning a new community, who dreamed of a better life for all residents.

As a planned community, Greenbelt consists of three components brought together for the first time:

Rexford Tugwell's desire for economic and social "cooperation"; a physical design based on planner Clarence Stein's plan for Radburn, New Jersey; and sociologist Clarence Perry's "Neighborhood Unit."

Greenbelt became a reality largely thanks to the vision of Rexford Guy Tugwell, who emphasized social and economic cooperation within communities. As a member of Franklin D. Roosevelt's "Brain Trust" and head of the Resettlement Administration (the New Deal agency which built Greenbelt), he hoped the towns in the greenbelt program would embody his dream of places where people could live and work together

cooperatively. He envisioned such towns all across America, but only three were built: Greenbelt, Maryland, outside of Washington, DC; Greenhills, Ohio, outside of Cincinnati; and Greendale, Wisconsin, outside of Milwaukee. The timing proved auspicious for Tugwell, as cooperatives formed a large part of New Deal programs in agencies such as the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, the Farm Credit Administration, the Tennessee Valley Authority, and the Rural Electrification Administration.

A New Jersey town provided the inspiration for Greenbelt's physical layout. Clarence Stein, assisted by

*"I have seen the blueprints of this project and have been greatly interested, but the actual sight itself exceeds anything I have dreamed of."*

— Franklin D. Roosevelt during a visit to Greenbelt in 1936.



President Franklin Delano Roosevelt examines the plans for Greenbelt on a visit to the site. Library of Congress photograph, courtesy of Greenbelt Museum.

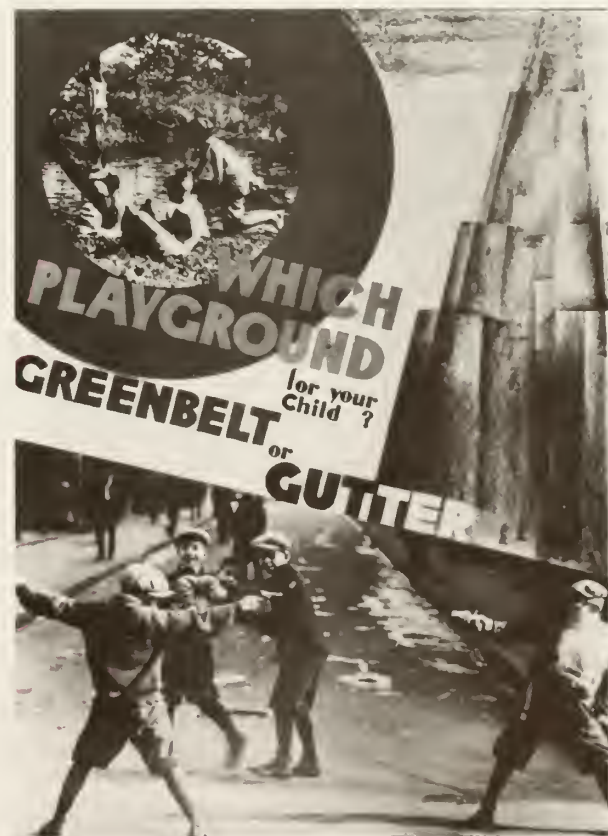


*Plan of Greenbelt by the Resettlement Administration. Courtesy of Greenbelt Museum.*

town planner Henry Wright, designed the community of Radburn at the behest of the City Housing Corporation of New York City. They developed a plan for "the motor age," showing how communities could co-exist with the coming automobile age. These elements included superblocks with central greens; separation of automobile and pedestrian traffic; cul-de-sacs; pedestrian underpasses; and homes facing the garden side, with their backs facing the street.

Stein believed that elements of his Radburn design realized their fullest potential in Greenbelt. The "superblock" which featured prominently in both Radburn and Greenbelt was much larger than a normal city block, organizing the housing in a pattern which allowed concentrations of green space. Greenbelt's rowhouses faced each other, forming "courts," with small central park areas. Stein placed larger park areas, often with play lots for children, between courts. So, in addition to very small, private yards of their own, residents enjoyed easy access to an open green area. Local roads formed the superblock boundaries, allowing people to reach their garages or parking spaces.

Consonant with the emphasis on cooperation within the community, Stein downplayed the importance of the individualizing automobile as he had in Radburn. The separation of automobile and pedestrian traffic by an internal walkway system and pedestrian underpasses made Greenbelt an unusually safe place for children. The walkways connected the courts and superblocks, while several pedestrian underpasses



*Greenbelt was intended as an antidote to the slums of the cities—something this government poster made clear. Library of Congress print, courtesy of the Greenbelt Museum.*





*An example of Greenbelt townhouses. Courtesy of Maryland Historical Society.*

conveyed the walkways under the main road to the central shopping area and school. The last unusual feature from Radburn's plan carried out in Greenbelt was the reversal of front and back from the normal American suburban pattern. The front of the rowhouses faced the court, or "garden" side, while the back faced the street. This emphasized the fact that Greenbelt was a walking community, as people's front doors led directly to the walkway system, while their back doors faced their access to parking and the area for trash receptacles. These design elements emphasized that Greenbelt, unlike so many towns, was to be a walking community.

The final element in Greenbelt's design—the concept of the "Neighborhood Unit"—resulted from the work of sociologist Clarence Perry, an ally of Stein's. During the previous decade, both men had joined the Regional Planning Association of America, a loosely-knit group of architects, planners, and social critics who rebelled against the rising tide of suburban sprawl. Perry proposed a neighborhood unit consisting of an elementary school and/or community center centrally located within walking distance of an entire residen-

tial cluster. Other centrally located buildings might be churches, shops, or a library. The neighborhood boundaries consisted of major arterial streets, but within the neighborhood roads carried local traffic only. Perry stressed that his ideas provided for the development of a sense of community, exactly what Tugwell desired.

Greenbelt's construction took place in an isolated area of Prince George's County, thirteen miles northeast of Washington. Since Tugwell was anxious to start the greenbelt town program as quickly as possible, he utilized land already belonging to the federal government, as did this parcel adjacent to the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center. Actual construction of Greenbelt began on October 12, 1935 and the initial tenants moved in on September 30, 1937, when the first housing blocks were completed.

The grand vision of the urban planners produced only a small town in Greenbelt as its housing consisted of just 885 units, 574 row houses, 306 apartments in four-story buildings, and five prefabricated detached homes. The "modern" buildings constructed in Greenbelt were plain and down-to-earth, as judged by

both contemporary observers and historians. An advisor to the project, Henry Churchill, called the home exteriors "competent and undistinguished." Historian Joseph Arnold labeled them "functional" or "contemporary," while urban planner David Myhra categorized them as what is now referred to as International Style.

The Farm Security Administration, which took over the greenbelt program from the Resettlement Administration in 1937, used several criteria to select the 885 families to live in Greenbelt from the thousands who desired to do so. Specific income limits eliminated many prospective residents, as Greenbelt was constructed to house low-income families. The administration attempted to select people who would represent a cross-section of the metropolitan Washington region in terms of religion, place of residence, and place of employment. The staff also assessed the willingness of the family to "cooperate and participate in activities of the town"—a key, but elusive, measure.

The issue of race created difficulties for the planners of the greentown program. In the 1930s, housing segregation was not yet a significant issue for most Americans, but the Resettlement Administration staff was concerned about the lack of decent housing for blacks and planned to build the Rossville Rural Development, a "Greenbelt for blacks" in Prince George's County. It quickly became obvious that a planned cooperative community for whites was stretching the tolerance limits of local citizens who would never approve a similar community for blacks in their midst. Officials quietly dropped the plan and justified themselves by explaining that blacks had their own low-cost housing project in northeast Washington—Langston Terrace—a project of the Public Works Administration built in 1937.

By November 1937, enough families had moved into town to make a

start, so city-manager Roy Braden began the economic and social "cooperative" aspects of Greenbelt. The townspeople evinced a willingness to organize, as during the first year they formed thirty-five diverse organizations with activities designed to appeal to every age group and both sexes, covering a wide spectrum of interests and differing political orientation. Among the most popular were the Journalistic Club, American Legion Post #136, Mother's Club, Boy Scouts, PTA, Bridge Club, Greenbelt Players, Camera Club, Girl Scouts, Men's Athletic Association, Brownies, Garden Club, Singles Club, and Community Band. Other groups served to bring a variety of people together, such as the Citizen's Association, the Junior Citizen's Association, and the Civic Forum.

The goal of cooperation received only partial fulfillment from the formation of social organizations, as economic cooperation remained an integral part of the Greenbelt plan. Interested Greenbelters formed the Cooperative Organizing Committee to decide what cooperatives they should create. Based on need in their isolated setting, they first developed a credit union, gas station, supermarket, drug store, barber shop, and theater, all within a year. The use of the cooperative idea extended beyond the formation of businesses to the provision of other community services. To meet the community's medical needs, residents formed the Greenbelt Health Association in January 1938. Similarly, interested parents formed a kindergarten, as public education before first grade was unavailable. While not forming specific cooperatives, groups of residents worked with town officials to set up both the first public library and bus transportation to connect Greenbelt to Berwyn where a street car line ran to downtown Washington.

The urgent need for communication within the community prompted Greenbelters to create a cooperative



*A customer fills up at Greenbelt's co-op gas station. Library of Congress photograph, courtesy of the Greenbelt Museum.*

for publishing a weekly newspaper. The *Greenbelt Cooperator* appeared on November 24, 1937. The paper, now called the *Greenbelt News Review*, has never missed an issue and is still distributed free to the community.

In addition to social and economic cooperatives, town administrators stressed that both social organizations and the formation of "traditions" were ways to create a sense of community. These "traditions" included the annual Labor Day Festival, fireworks on the Fourth of July, Greenbelt Day celebrations in June, and the Festival of Light in December. Federal officials regarded a "sense of community" as necessary for the "cooperative" part of their enterprise to succeed. Greenbelters made a flourishing start with their co-ops and social organizations in place, and the cohesiveness of the first residents was clearly reinforced by the distinctive physical plan.

Greenbelters faced their first major challenge when the federal government hurriedly constructed 1,000 "defense homes" adjacent to their 885 units in order to house defense workers during World War II. Almost overnight, the town size more than doubled and transient newcomers had to learn to get along with those

who regarded themselves as "Greenbelt pioneers." During the war years, Greenbelt's co-ops were one of the few places where pacifists could obtain jobs; returning veterans found a number of pacifists ensconced in their midst. When federal officials announced their decision to sell the town in 1945, both older residents and newcomers realized they would have to work together if their goal of forming a cooperative housing venture was to succeed. Because of their common dream, these individuals successfully united to form the Greenbelt Veteran Housing Corporation, today known as Greenbelt Housing, Inc. They not only purchased the housing from the government but also formed a successful ongoing enterprise, which continues to this day. Additionally, the town still has a co-op grocery store and pharmacy in the central shopping area.

The 1960s brought new and different challenges to Greenbelters. The construction of the Capital Beltway in 1964 made their town readily accessible to developers who wished to raze what they perceived as a rundown, old-fashioned community in order to build modern, high-rise apartment buildings. One developer in particular, Charles Bresler, earned



## STATEMENT OF GOALS

A DEMONSTRATION IN  
SUBURBAN PLANNING  
BASIC PROGRAM

TO OBTAIN a large tract of land, and thus avoid the complications ordinarily due to diverse ownerships; in this tract to create a community, protected by an encircling green belt; the community to be designed primarily for families of modest income, and arranged and managed so as to encourage a family and community life which will be better than they now enjoy, but which will not involve subjecting them to coercion or theoretical and untested discipline; the dwellings and the land upon which they are located to be held in one ownership, preferably a local public agency to which the Federal Government will transfer title, and which agency will rent or lease the dwellings but will not sell them; a municipal government to be set up, in character with such governments now existing or possible in that region; coordination to be established, in relation to the local and State governments, so that there may be provided those public services of educational and other character which the community will require; and, finally, to accomplish these purposes in such a way that the community may be a taxpaying participant in the region, that extravagant outlays from the individual family income will not be a necessity, and that the rents will be suitable to families of modest income.

To develop a land-use plan for the entire tract; to devise a system of rural economy coordinated with the land-use plan for the rural portions of the tract surrounding the suburban community; and to integrate both the physical plans and the economies of the rural area and the suburban community.

The Resettlement Administration  
Washington, DC  
September 1936



*A shopper in Greenbelt's cooperative grocery store. The grocery store, along with a number of other cooperative businesses, were central to Tugwell's plan for community formation. Library of Congress photograph, courtesy of Greenbelt Museum.*

the ire of Greenbelters for actions such as reneging on agreements by building at a higher density than promised, and bulldozing the trees on a coveted plot before he had gained permission. Greenbelters fought back every way they could: in the courts, by writing letters, holding demonstrations, and talking to anyone who would listen. While the core of original Greenbelt is now surrounded by new buildings, Greenbelters succeeded in saving their town.

Greenbelters were able to meet these times of trial because they had two important factors on their side: a strong city government, and most importantly, the local newspaper. The *News Review* serves multiple

functions in the community. The paper not only informs residents of local events and happenings but also provides a mechanism for them to communicate rapidly with each other. The paper also focuses on Greenbelt's identity as a planned cooperative community, giving newcomers an introduction to their town and constantly reminding long-timers of what is special about their chosen place of residence.

Thus it happens that in suburban Washington, surrounded by office parks, strip malls, townhouses, and condominiums, a remnant of the New Deal continues to exist. Greenbelters proudly protect their community's physical plan which enhances the social and economic cooperation of its residents.



Cathy D. Knepper is a historian and social activist, who feels great empathy with the creators of Greenbelt. She received her PhD in American Studies from the University of Maryland, College Park, and her book, *A Living Legacy of the New Deal: The Planned Community of Greenbelt, Maryland*, is forthcoming from the Johns Hopkins University Press.



# Necessary Visions: Community Planning in Wartime

By Jack Breihan

During World War II a tidal wave of newcomers washed over Baltimore. By the time most veterans had returned in early 1947, the population of the Baltimore metropolitan district had grown by 25 percent—about a quarter-million new residents. Unlike earlier immigration from overseas, this was domestic “in-migration” from other parts of the United States, particularly the Pennsylvania and West Virginia mountains and the southern tidewater. Many of the new arrivals squeezed—with difficulty—into existing dwellings in Baltimore. But two “new towns” arose on the fringes of the city to house the war workers, offering new visions of community in Baltimore.

Middle River in Baltimore County is the better known of the two. It was the destination for thousands of white in-migrants coming to work at the Glenn L. Martin aircraft plants there. Cherry Hill in Baltimore City developed a few months later, as a new community for African-American war workers at the shipyards and other Baltimore war plants. Although separated by the gulf of racial segregation, both “new towns” reflected the planning principles of nearby Greenbelt, while including some distinctive features of their own.

Early in 1939 the Martin plant in Middle River began to tool up for war. A large order from the French Air Force was followed by a succession of huge orders from the British military and from the United States Army and Navy. The company’s employment ballooned from 3,000 in 1939 to a peak of more than 52,000 at the beginning of 1943. A country hamlet of only 161 residents

in 1939, Middle River could hardly house this influx. Martin workers lived in backyard trailers and tents, converted chicken-coops, even their cars. Those who managed to find lodging in Baltimore commuted by car, and by 1941 traffic jams on the old two-lane Eastern Avenue had become horrendous. This was a matter of concern to the company. In-migrant workers unable to find adequate housing for their families, or worn out by traffic, had higher absentee rates. Many quit and moved on to other production areas.

IF YOU CAN'T FIGHT-*Work*

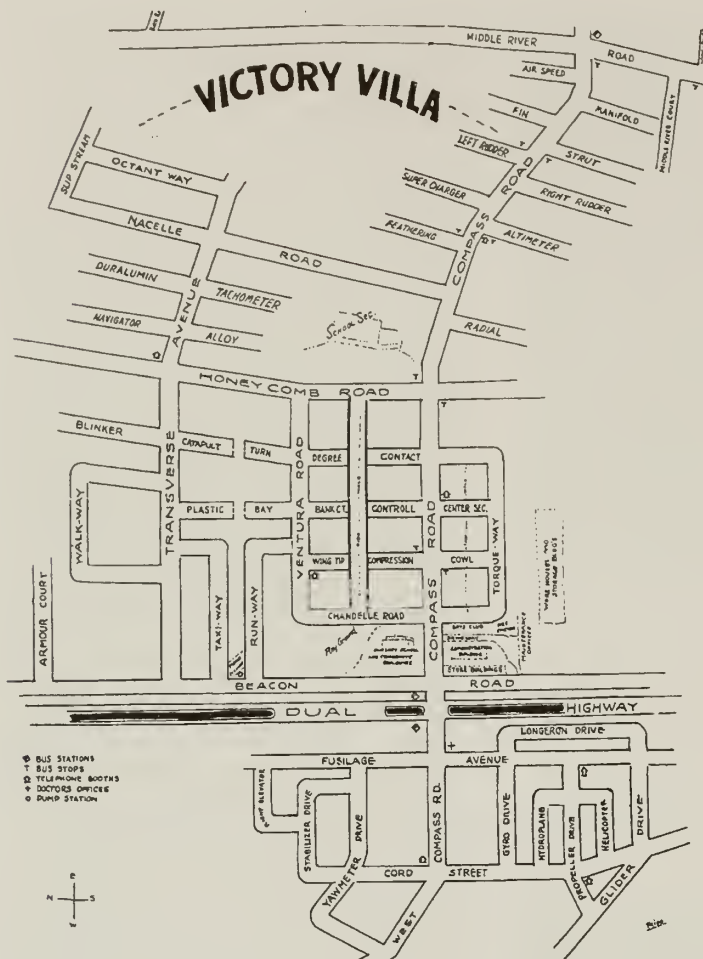


HELP BUILD *Martin*  
*Bombers* IN BALTIMORE

*World War II posters like this attracted workers—white and black, male and female—to booming war factories. Here, workers found steady work but housing shortages. Courtesy of the Glenn L. Martin Aviation Museum.*

The Martin Company itself took the initial steps in planning a new community, prodding the state roads commission to provide Middle River with two new divided highways, the New Eastern and Martin Boulevards. Finding that local builders were uninterested in providing houses for thousands of semi-skilled workers (Martin’s average wage in 1941 was 77 cents an hour), the company erected six hundred prefabricated cottages built of a new material, a fiber and asbestos paneling trade-named “Cemesto.” This kept costs down to about \$3,000 a unit, about half the cost of masonry apartments and row houses such as those built at Greenbelt. Rents as low as \$30 a month were affordable even by the average riveter.

Although the houses were small (24 by 28 feet), they were not simply arranged in the street grids customary in working-class Baltimore neighborhoods but according to the precepts of contemporary “garden city” planning used at Greenbelt. Unlike Greenbelt, however, the new community was composed of individual houses and lots. In this respect it resembled well-known local “garden suburbs” such as Roland Park, Guilford, and Stoneleigh. Ordinary Martin workers could now enjoy planning features formerly limited to upper-income suburbs. Many of these had to do with road safety. Residential streets were carefully separated from the high-speed traffic on Martin Boulevard. Pedestrian paths were laid out, leading to parkland and playgrounds. Two new neighborhoods used different ways of accomplishing a safe pedestrian environment. In Aero



Map of the "Victory Villa" section of the Middle River. Note the street names are all related to aircraft. Courtesy Maryland Historical Society.

Acres, streets were designed with gentle curves to slow the cars down. At Stansbury Estates on Wilson Point the houses were arranged in "super-blocks" facing away from the streets into large open lawns. As in Roland Park and Greenbelt, a "shopping center" was also part of the plan. Aero Acres had one of Maryland's first "strip malls," a row of shops sharing a covered walkway, with a large parking lot in front. Wilson Point had a smaller neighborhood shopping center.

Later in 1941 government agencies built on Martin's beginning. The Maryland State Planning Commission hired Hale Walker, town planner of Greenbelt, and Irving C. Root, then Superintendent of the National Park Service, to prepare a master plan

for Middle River—a new town intended to be three times the size of Greenbelt. This took up many of the same "garden city" ideas: pedestrian paths to playgrounds and school sites, curving streets separate from

A street with "Cemesto" houses in Middle River. These prefabricated units greatly reduced building costs, allowing Martin workers of even the most modest means to afford the rent. Courtesy of the Glenn L. Martin Aviation Museum.

the new dual highways, and the construction of another strip shopping center. It incorporated a new wrinkle that would become familiar in post-war suburbs: the cul-de-sac. Thirty of these little dead-end "courts" radiated off the new spine streets of Compass Road and Transverse Avenue. The street names of Middle River clearly marked its identity as an aviation center. Seventy of them bear the names of aircraft parts (for example, Fuselage Avenue and Altimeter Court), aviation pioneers (Doolittle and Earhart Drives), or air bases (Henderson and McDill Roads).

After some wrangling over who should bear the cost, the federal government paid for new schools and essential water and sewer lines for the new community—plus the houses themselves. First came hundreds of trailers set up near the factory. Then, during 1942, eleven hundred prefabricated homes appeared in the new community of Victory Villa adjoining Aero Acres, and a year later a thousand apartments were finished in Victory Villa





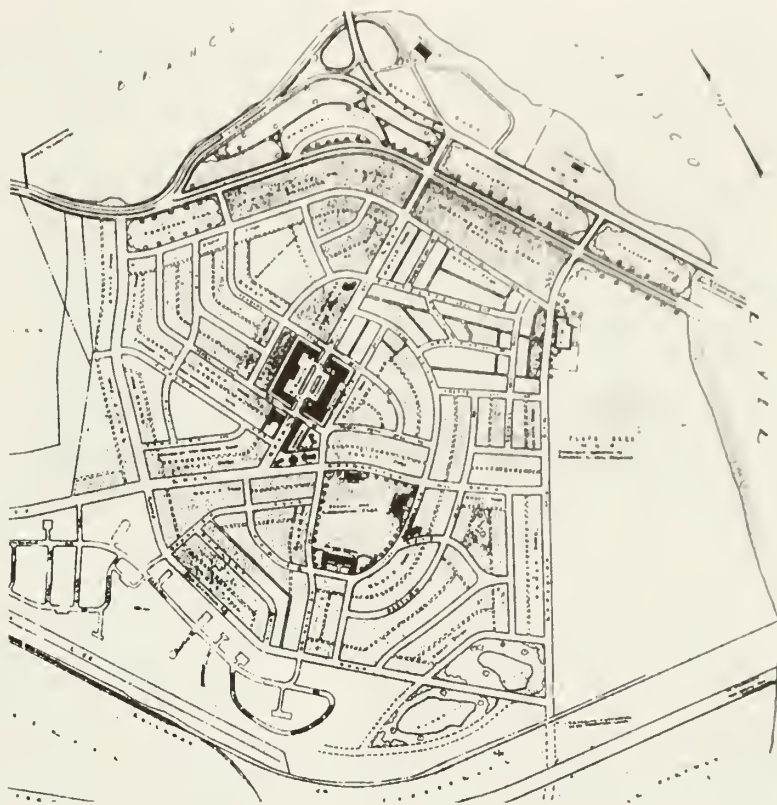
Gardens to the north. Finally in 1944 and 1945 private builders—several from out of town—joined the effort. They erected prefabricated houses in Edgewater but more often large brick garden-apartment complexes: Mars Estates, Burkeleigh Manor, Oak Grove, and Riverdale, plus several more to the south in Essex.

By 1943 the Middle River area (including Essex and Chase) could lay claim to being the second-largest city in Maryland, smaller only than Baltimore. Yet its population consisted literally of strangers. Only in-migrants were permitted to settle, and they came from all across the country. Families from rural Appalachia and northern big cities had seldom rubbed shoulders before the war. During a time of stress they might easily have found things to quarrel about, a matter of concern to both the Martin Company and federal production authorities. Once again the company took the lead, sponsoring literally hundreds of sports teams, clubs, and musical groups in which newcomers and

native Baltimoreans played side by side. The company also helped establish a USO Center for war workers at Aero Acres—one of the few civilian USO's. The federal government projects included four community centers. Like the military USO's, these included a gymnasium for sports and dances and meeting rooms that housed classes and child

care and served as incubators for new churches and other civic organizations.

Unfortunately racial segregation was one of the elements of this new community. Like many Baltimore employers, Glenn L. Martin preferred in-migrant white workers to African-American workers already here. Only in late 1941, under pressure from the National Negro Congress, the NAACP, the Urban League, and President Roosevelt's Executive Order 8802, did Martin hire any black workers. But the Middle River plants—and the surrounding new community—remained white-only. African-American employees were assigned to the company's satellite plant in Canton in Baltimore City. By 1943 the pool of local black workers finally ran low, and African-American in-migrants began to appear in large numbers. Nearly 100,000 arrived during the later years of the war.



*Plan of the Cherry Hill Area. Note the curving streets and the walking paths. Like Greenbelt, the housing focuses on the central commercial area.*



*Strip shopping center for the Victory Villa development. Among the stores were the "True Blue Laundry and Dry Cleaners" and the "Victory Vogue Shop." Courtesy of the Glenn L. Martin Aviation Museum.*





*Housing at Cherry Hill built in 1945. Courtesy Housing Authority of Baltimore City.*

African-American in-migrants faced even more daunting problems than their white counterparts. Strict housing segregation kept existing black residential neighborhoods from expanding. Already overcrowded before the war, they became increasingly uncomfortable. Absenteeism began to rise. During the hot summer of 1943, everyone was mindful of the race riots igniting in Detroit and other cities. Worried about maintaining war production, federal officials secured funds to build 2,000 housing units for African Americans. Several temporary housing projects were quickly thrown up near the shipyards, but plans to build a permanent new black community raised a political storm. The site chosen, in northeast Baltimore at the location of today's Hollander Ridge housing project, raised loud protests in nearby white neighborhoods.

Private developers came up with a new idea, vacant industrial land on the southern boundary of the city at Cherry Hill. This was originally an unpromising, marshy site, the location of the city incinerator and a potters' field. Supported by Federal Housing Administration loans, three private builders put up 600 houses there in 1944. As at Middle River, government agencies then came along. Federal housing authorities added another 600 houses in 1945. The Baltimore City Plan Commission

laid out a master plan for a new suburban community as comprehensive as the plan for Middle River. The plan featured a symmetrical pattern of curving streets (including several cul-de-sacs) separate from the high-speed highway interchange of Hanover Street and Waterview Avenue. A community building, strip shopping center, school, parks, and playgrounds were all included from the beginning. Both public and private developments consisted mostly of brick row houses and low-rise apartments similar to those in Greenbelt. As at Middle River, most of the initial residents were in-migrant war workers. These newcomers used the community building's meeting rooms to organize new churches and other civic organizations.

Cherry Hill saw more public housing constructed in the 1950s, but after

the war many of the privately-built units were sold to their residents. The same was true in Middle River, where the Martin Company's rental houses were sold in 1946 and the government ones a decade later. Community identity and civic organizations are strong in both areas. Cherry Hill residents hold an annual reunion. The 1945 shopping center is currently being modernized, and some of the public-housing units have been demolished for more privately owned housing. At Middle River in 1996, the Maryland Humanities Council helped support a Golden Anniversary Celebration for its wartime neighborhoods. Eight hundred present and former residents turned out at the still-standing Victory Villa Community Building.

As public housing high-rises built during the 1950s come crashing down, and as Marylanders worry about suburban sprawl reaching farther and farther out into the country, these relatively compact communities of the 1940s continue to offer low-cost housing in a planned environment.



Jack Breihan is a professor of history at Loyola College in Baltimore, where he has taught since receiving his PhD from Cambridge University. His research interests include British administrative and American aviation history, as well as the history of architecture and planning. The research for this article was conducted as part of a community history program funded by the Maryland Humanities Council, the Maryland Historical Trust, and the Baltimore County Office of Planning.

# Humanities in Maryland

## From the Resource Center

The following videotapes may be borrowed from the Maryland Humanities Council's Resource Center. For further information, call Polly Weber at 410-625-4830.

### Glenn L. Martin Victory Celebration

Records the celebration in Hangar #4 at the Martin State Airport commemorating both the fiftieth anniversary of victory in World War II and the contributions of Martin workers. Men and women were interviewed during the celebration about why they came to work for Glenn L. Martin, how they got to work, recreation during the war, and the overall effect of war on their lives.

### New Towns for America

Explores mid-twentieth century "New Towns" in Maryland, including Columbia and Greenbelt, as contemporary examples of the traditional American pioneering urge to build a new world.

### Washington Grove: Town Within a Forest

Depicts the unique history, participatory form of government, and development of Washington Grove which was established in 1873 as a Methodist summer camp. It is unique in that more of its 200 acres are dedicated to wilderness preservation than to development.

### Maryland in the Great Depression

Shows how the Depression affected the people of Maryland from the Allegheny mountains of western Maryland to the Eastern Shore.

## Money Available

Nonprofit organizations and community groups are eligible to apply for grants from the Maryland Humanities Council. Staff members will help you plan programs and work on grant applications. To receive a copy of our grant guidelines, call or write the Council (the address and phone number are on the back cover) or retrieve them from the Council's homepage located at <http://www.mdhc.org>.

The Council awards two types of grants: minigrants (\$1,200 or less) and regular grants (\$1,201 to \$10,000). Minigrants must be submitted at least six weeks before your project begins; there are no set deadlines for minigrants. Regular grants must be submitted by the following deadlines for consideration:

First Draft	Final Draft	Decision Date
June 15, 1999	August 13, 1999	September 18, 1999
October 15, 1999	December 10, 1999	January 22, 2000

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# Newly Elected Board Members

At the September meeting of the Board of Directors of the Maryland Humanities Council, the following people were elected as new members:

**Lois Green Carr** is historian of Historic St. Mary's City and is recognized internationally as the leading social and economic historian of the colonial Chesapeake. She is the co-author of *Maryland's Revolution of Government, 1689-1692*; *Robert Cole's World: Agriculture and Society in Early Maryland*; and co-editor of *Colonial Chesapeake Society*. She was the co-recipient of the 1996 Eisenberg Prize for Excellence in the Humanities, and received her undergraduate degree from Swarthmore and her PhD in history from Harvard.



**Lenneal Henderson** is the Distinguished Professor of Government and Public Administrator in the School of Public Affairs and Senior Fellow in the Schaefer Center for Public Policy at the University of Baltimore. He has also taught at the Federal Executive Institute, the University of Tennessee, and Howard University. He serves on numerous boards, including the Citizen's Planning and Housing Association of Baltimore City, the Baltimore Urban League, and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. He received his AB, MA, and PhD from the University of California, Berkeley.

**Alison D. Kohler** is an attorney with Spence, Kohler, Christie, and Pulver, PA in Towson. She previously practiced with two other firms in Baltimore. She has served as president of the Women's Executive Network and as a member of the board of governors of the Maryland State Bar Association and of the executive council of the Bar Association of Baltimore City. She has authored several articles in legal journals. She has her JD from the Georgetown University Law Center and a BS in Chemical Engineering and in Science and Humanities from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



**Albert J. Matricciani, Jr.** is Associate Judge of the Circuit Court for Baltimore City. Prior to serving on the bench, he practiced law in Baltimore for fifteen years. He has been active in the American Bar Association, Maryland State Bar Association, and the Bar Association of Baltimore City and has worked on various civic boards, including most recently serving as Vice Chair of the Attorney General and Lieutenant Governor's Family Violence Council. He received his BA from Villanova University, a JD from the University of Maryland School of Law, and an MLA from the Johns Hopkins University.

*Congratulations and welcome to the Board!*



# New on the Maryland Bookshelf



## *Letters from Annapolis: Midshipmen Write Home, 1848-1969*

Edited by Anne Marie Drew

Anne Marie Drew explores the experiences of Midshipmen during their education at the Naval Academy by using the letters they wrote home to their parents. Many of the students' concerns remained constant over the one hundred and twenty-one years: grades, formation, drill, demerits, and homesickness. But, there are numerous other, more personal observations unique to each midshipman's time at the academy: the Civil War, football, social life, and ceremony. Drew's selections of letters paint a candid and memorable picture of life in one part of Annapolis.

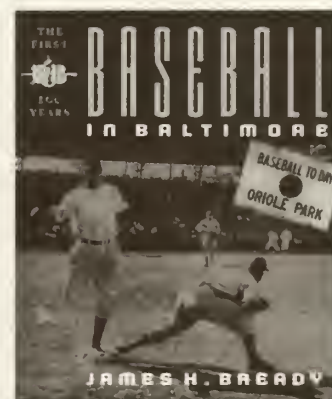
*Anne Marie Drew is an associate professor of English at the United States Naval Academy. Her primary research interest is theater history and she is director of the Masqueraders at the Academy.*

## *Baseball in Baltimore: The First Hundred Years*

By James H. Bready

James H. Bready presents a vivid portrait of the players, managers, ballparks, and games that shaped the history of the national pastime in one of the United States' oldest baseball towns. His narrative relates not only the history of the well-known Orioles, but also of the lesser-known teams such as the Black Sox and Elite Giants of the Negro leagues and the Terrapins of the Federal League. Richly illustrated with rare photos and prints, Bready's volume is a delight for baseball fans as well as historians.

*James H. Bready has written for the Baltimore Sun for more than fifty years and was one of the first members of the Society for American Baseball Research.*



## Timely and Timeless

The Wisdom  
of  
E. Burdette  
Backus

Foreword by Jack Mendelsohn

Edited by Edd Doerr

## *Timely and Timeless: The Wisdom of E. Burdette Backus*

Edited by Edd Doerr, with a foreword by Jack Mendelsohn

Edd Doerr has edited an anthology of the pulpit and radio addresses of one of the most influential leaders and exponents of twentieth-century Humanism and Unitarian Universalism, E. Burdette Backus (1888-1955). Backus had a popular radio ministry and was noted for his support of civil liberties, world peace, and religious expression "deeply rooted in principles of freedom, reason, tolerance, and social responsibility."

*Edd Doerr is a Maryland author and the executive director of Americans for Religious Liberty. He has written numerous books on the subject of religious liberty.*

# Family Matters Completes Another Successful Series!

The Fall series of Family Matters programs just ended with almost 100 people coming together each week to discuss books and ideas. The fall programs were held at three Baltimore-area locations: the Rutland Transitional Housing Program; the O'Donnell Heights Public Housing Project at the Dundalk Avenue Branch of the Pratt Library; and the Medfield Police Athletic League Center.

The Maryland Humanities Council's Family Matters is a free, innovative, six-week reading program that brings at-risk youth together with an adult family member to talk about books. This project helps families become closer by encouraging discussions between generations about stories and themes that relate to everyday family life.

Each week of the program, the family receives a set of books to keep. The next week, they come together to talk about the readings and to share a light supper. The Enoch Pratt Free Library, a partner in the project, selects the books and provides librarians to lead the discussions. Family Matters programs take place at public housing sites, Police Athletic League centers, transitional housing shelters, churches, and community centers.

In the spring of 1999, the program will begin expanding out of the Baltimore area to serve other areas of the state. The Gaithersburg Regional Library in Montgomery County has agreed to host a Family Matters program for



*Family Matters program at Medfield Police Athletic Center. From left to right, Chris Lewis; Cheryl Kellum, with daughter, Amilla; Talisha Thompson.*

children in the local transitional housing shelter. Baltimore-area programs will be held in Turner's Station, at the Latino Community Center, and at the Pleasantview Housing Project.

We are continually looking for new sites to host the Family Matters Program. For more information, contact Belva Scott at 410-625-4830.

FAMILY MATTERS IS MADE POSSIBLE BY THE  
GENEROUS SUPPORT OF:

The Margaret Alexander Edwards Trust

The Jacob and Hilda Blaustein Foundation

The William G. Baker, Jr. Memorial Foundation

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Two Anonymous Donors

The many individual and corporate contributors to the  
Maryland Humanities Council

*We thank everyone for their belief in and support of this  
program!*

# Free Speakers

The Maryland Humanities Council is pleased to present its third series of *Speakers Bureau* programs for the 1998–99 season. These 30 speakers, who are outstanding Maryland humanities scholars, are available free for presentations to civic and community groups throughout the state of Maryland. The Council pays for the scholar's honorarium and travel expenses—all the sponsoring organization needs to do is provide a space and an audience.

We've added ten new topics this year:

## Great Thinkers:

### **The Intellectual Formation of Latin America**

Explores the wide variety of thought about Latin American identity, and the Latinos and Latinas who have considered it from pan-American, nationalistic, native, and feminist perspectives.

### **War and Dancing: Strange Bedfellows?**

Treats dance as physical expressions of nationalism and political identity during the wars the United States has fought, and gives audience members a chance to learn some of these dances.

### **Black WAC's (Women's Army Corps) During World War II**

Analyzes the experiences of African-American women in the Women's Army Corps, and how they overcame segregation and discrimination within the Army to contribute to the war effort.

### **A Century of Fashion**

Reviews the changes in women's fashion over the course of the nineteenth century by focusing on changes in form and technology.

### **African-American Life in Several of the Forty African-American Communities in Baltimore County, Maryland**

Relates the history of African-Americans living in rural and suburban communities by discussing community formation, the role of their churches, and their educational and social life.



### **Becoming a Virgin: The Love Life of Queen Elizabeth the First**

Not about the singer Madonna, but about this Tudor monarch's complex and varied romances; the mixture of domestic politics, international affairs, and English noblemen creates an intriguing portrait of this queen.

### **You Can Get There from Here: Community and Women's Work on Smith Island, Maryland**

Presents the distinctive culture of Smith Island and its close ties to the bounty of the Chesapeake Bay, through a presentation by both a native of Smith Island and a folklorist.

### **How Can We Know if a Person is Evil?**

Explores the notion of evil not as the outrageous acts of monstrous people, but as thoughtless or indifferent acts. By using a literary example, the presentation challenges the audience to consider the true nature of evil in society.

### **A Story in Search of an Audience**

Provides a background on storytelling and mythmaking, and investigates the way stories both teach lessons and traditions and tell us about different societies and their peoples.

### **Underwater Archaeology in Maryland**

Outlines a number of prominent projects including a German submarine from World War II, Commodore Barney's Chesapeake Flotilla from the War of 1812, as well as commercial ships such as a nineteenth century paddlewheeler.

And, almost all the topics from last year are still available as well! For the complete Speakers Bureau catalogue or for more information on this program, contact Polly Weber, 410-625-4830.



# FREE Reading/Discussion Programs

The Maryland Humanities Council sponsors *free* Reading/Discussion Programs throughout Maryland. These informal discussion programs examine subjects that shape our lives and form our opinions.

Currently, the Council offers series that focus on three themes: "Family," "Voices and Visions" (American Poetry), and "Democracy in America." And, a new, fourth theme is being developed for availability in the spring of 1999. Each series lasts from three to six weeks, during which individuals join together in lively and thought-provoking conversations about their readings. Reading/Discussion programs take place at diverse locations: libraries, senior citizen centers, government workplaces, and correctional institutions have all hosted programs in the past.

Eligible non-profit organizations serving as hosts select the theme, set the time and place, register the participants, and provide a site coordinator. They are also responsible for returning the books to the Council, so that others may use



*A "Democracy in America" Reading/Discussion group at the Holiday Park Senior Center in Wheaton. The discussion is led by Dr. David Grimsted, a professor of history at the University of Maryland, College Park.*

them. The Maryland Humanities Council provides the books, as well as a scholar who acts as a discussion leader.

Organizations wishing to apply for the Reading/Discussion Program should contact Belva Scott at 410-625-4830.

## Did You Know. . .

that last year, the Maryland Humanities Council helped bring the humanities into the lives of more than 1,500,000 Marylanders? From our annual Chautauqua in Garrett County, to free Speakers Bureau presentations in Rockville, to Family Matters in Baltimore, to Reading/Discussion Programs on the Eastern Shore, the Council enriches the lives of everyone in our state. Please help us continue our work—we need your support.

# Recent Grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities

In addition to supporting the work of the Maryland Humanities Council, the National Endowment for the Humanities in Washington, DC awards grants directly to institutions and individuals to support programs for: original research in the humanities; educational opportunities for teachers; preservation of texts and materials; translations of important works; museum exhibitions; television and radio programs; and public discussion and study. For more information, visit their web site at <http://www.neh.fed.us>.

The following Maryland institutions and individuals have recently received grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities:

**University of Maryland, College Park**, up to \$29,050 in outright funds to support a "Schools for a New Millennium" planning project on the creation of a curriculum reflecting cultural diversity, for a high school in Hyattsville. (Adele Seeff, Project Director)

**Walters Art Gallery**, up to \$150,270 in outright funds plus an offer of up to \$175,000 in matching funds, to support the reinstallation of the Egyptian collection and implementation of accompanying public and educational programs. (Ellen D. Reeder, Project Director)

**Stone Lantern Films, Inc.**, up to \$380,410 in outright funds plus an offer of up to \$200,000 in matching funds, to support production of the first two episodes in a four-hour television documentary series on the history of public education in America, 1840 to the present. (Sarah Mondale, Project Director)

**University of Maryland, College Park**, up to \$150,000 in outright funds plus an offer of up to \$40,000 in matching funds, to support the preparation of an edition of the complete poetry of Percy Bysshe Shelley. (Neil R. Fraistat, Project Director)

**The Johns Hopkins University**, up to \$125,000 in outright funds plus an offer of up to \$190,000 in matching funds, to support the preparation of an edition of the papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower. (Louis P. Galambos, Project Director)

**Marjoleine Kars**, up to \$30,000 in outright funds for "Breaking Loose Together: Religion and Rebellion in Revolutionary North Carolina, 1766-1771." She is an assistant professor in the History Department at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County.

**University of Maryland, College Park**, up to \$24,116 in outright funds to support a faculty study and curriculum development project on the ancient city of Caesarea for elementary and secondary school teachers for Prince George's County. (Frederick Winter, Project Director)

**Walters Art Gallery**, up to \$600,000 in matching funds to support renovation for the ancient art exhibition galleries and endowment for a curatorial position in ancient art. (Ellen D. Reeder, Project Director)

**David A. Bell**, up to \$30,000 for "The National and the Sacred in Early Modern France." He is an associate professor in the History Department at the Johns Hopkins University.

**Montgomery College, Rockville Campus**, up to \$500,000 in matching funds to support bridge funding and endowment for collaborative faculty development activities through a partnership between Montgomery College and the Smithsonian Institution. (Myrna Goldenberg, Project Director)

**Michael Kazin**, up to \$30,000 in outright funds for "The People and William Jennings Bryan." He is a professor in the History Department at American University.

**Joseph P. Reidy**, up to \$30,000 in outright funds for "Black Sailors in the Civil War." He is a professor in the History Department at Howard University.

# Gift Ideas for the Holiday Season

Looking for that perfect gift? Let us help.

We have our line of mugs and tote bags featuring Maryland Authors. Mugs or totes are \$8.00 each, with the price including sales tax and shipping. Quantities of some items are limited, so order soon to avoid disappointment.



I now understood the pathway  
from slavery to freedom . . .  
I set out . . . at whatever cost  
of trouble to learn how to read.

Frederick Douglass

SCALPEL IS A SCALPEL IS



A SCALPEL IS A SCALPEL

Writer GERTRUDE STEIN reached her fourth year at The Johns Hopkins Medical School, Baltimore in 1901, when she failed a course and dropped out. She then turned her attention from the sciences to the arts and humanities, and moved to Paris, where her salon became a gathering place for artists and writers.



They who dream by day are  
cognizant of many things which  
escape those who dream by night.

Edgar Allan Poe



Baltimore ... I belong here  
where everything is  
civilized and gay  
and rotten and polite

F. Scott Fitzgerald



Men have a much better time of  
it than women. For one thing,  
they marry later. For another  
thing, they die earlier.

H. L. Mencken

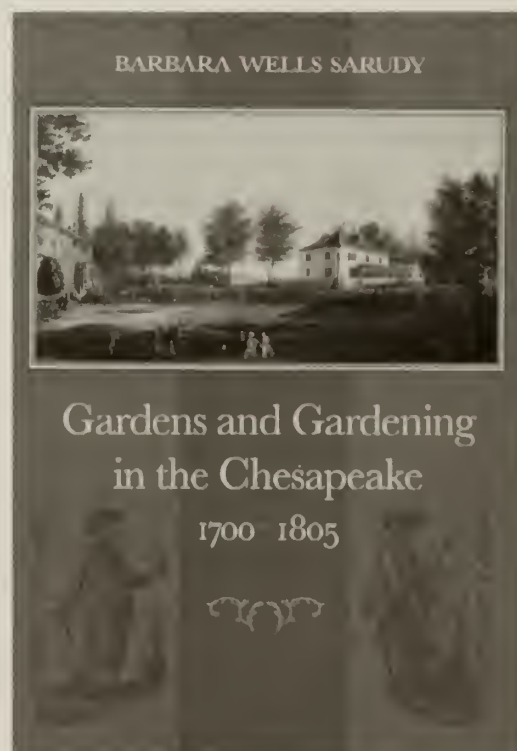


I LOVE MYSELF WHEN I AM LAUGHING  
... AND THEN AGAIN WHEN I AM  
LOOKING MEAN AND IMPRESSIVE

ZORA NEALE HURSTON

We are also selling *Gardens and Gardening in the Chesapeake, 1700-1805*, written by our Executive Director, Barbara Wells Sarudy. It is a wonderful book that traces the development of both elite and non-elite Chesapeake gardens over the course of the eighteenth century. Using a detailed reconstruction of an Annapolis craftsman's garden as a departure point, Sarudy explores who labored in these gardens, how gardeners were supplied, and what forms these gardens followed. She concludes that Chesapeake gardeners followed forms that demonstrated order and control over nature, in a countryside where the disorder and wildness of nature were everywhere. Finally, she demonstrates how these gardens reflected emerging, uniquely American sensibilities and ideals which increasingly rejected British models and forms. It has a lovely section of 21 color plates dealing with early American gardens, and has illustrative woodcuts throughout. This lovely hardback is a perfect gift for the gardener or historian in the family. The price is only \$33.45, including sales tax and shipping, and will be signed by the author!

To order any of these products, please contact Renée Gordon or Stephen Hardy at 410-625-4830. MasterCard and Visa accepted.





## Calendar of Humanities Events

The following programs are receiving funds from the Maryland Humanities Council. Council grants are made possible through major support from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Maryland's Division of Historical and Cultural Programs, corporations, foundations, and individuals. Since dates and times are subject to change, please contact the project director to confirm these details before attending any event.

### Exhibits

Through November 29      **Bridges to Zion: The People of Maryland and the Land of Israel**

Exhibit examines the relationships between Maryland and Israel, and how these relationships have grown and changed over the past half century.

Location: Jewish Museum of Maryland, Baltimore

Contact: Barry Kessler, 410-732-6400

Sponsor: Jewish Museum of Maryland

Through November      **Park Heights: Lives Along an Avenue**

Exhibit displays photographic portraits from the diverse communities living along Baltimore's Park Heights Avenue.

Location: Exhibit at Jewish Community Center, Baltimore

Contact: Amy Bernstein, 410-466-1292

Sponsor: University of Baltimore

**Paul Robeson: A Man for His Time—  
A Model for the Future**

Exhibit and symposium celebrate the centennial of the birth of Paul Robeson, by examining aspects of his life including his political activism, his life as a scholar and athlete, and his contributions to theater and music.

January 15– March 22, 1999      Location: Exhibit at Coppin State College, Baltimore

November 20 9 AM–5 PM      Location: Symposium at Coppin State College, Baltimore

& November 21

9:00 AM–  
12:30 PM

Contact: Camay Murphy, 410-383-5633

Sponsor: Coppin State College

**Witness for Nature: The World of  
Rachel Carson**

Exhibit, living history presentation, and lectures explore the writings and philosophy of Rachel Carson, author of *Silent Spring*, the book that increased environmental awareness in this country and abroad.

November 18 7:00 PM      Location: Lecture for educators by Dr. John Juringa

January 23– April 26, 1999      Location: Exhibit at the Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art, Salisbury

Contact: Samuel Dyke, 410-742-4988

Sponsor: The Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art

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Through  
April 1999

**Something Extra: Traditional Decorative Carvings on Chesapeake Bay Work Boats**

Exhibit examines the important role that decorative boat carvings have played in the lives of the watermen who use them and the craftsmen who created them.

Location: Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, St. Michael's

Contact: *Peter Leshner, 410-745-2916*

Sponsor: Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum

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Through  
February 2000

**Colonial Capitals of the Chesapeake: Jamestown and St. Mary's City**

Exhibit traces the evolution of two seventeenth-century colonial capitals, St. Mary's City and Jamestown, revealing their similarities and differences, and assessing the impact of political, economic, and social forces of the day.

Location: Exhibit Gallery at Historic St. Mary's City Visitors Center

Contact: *Silas Hurry, 301-373-2280*

Sponsor: St. Mary's City Foundation

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## Programs

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Through  
December  
1998

**Exploring Venezuela: An Extended Classroom Experience**

Social studies students explore the people and culture of Venezuela through regular communication with a teacher who is spending a year teaching English in Merida, Venezuela.

Location: Northern Middle School, Owings Mills, and Merida, Venezuela

Contact: *Richard Harris, 410-257-1622*

Sponsor: Northern Middle School

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**African-American Culture:  
Transcending the Harlem Renaissance**

Slide presentations, film screenings, gallery talks, and visits with contemporary artists explore the artistic traditions that contribute to a vital African American presence in literature, drama, music, and art. These programs provide a cultural context for the exhibition "Narratives of African-American Art and Identity: The David C. Driskell Collection."

November 19  
2-5 PM

Location: Lecture and Gallery Tour, Art/Sociology Building, University of Maryland, College Park

December 4  
8 AM-2 PM

Location: Technology Workshop, Room 3140 Engineering Building, University of Maryland, College Park

Contact: *Adele Seeff, 301-405-6830*

Sponsor: Center for Renaissance and Baroque Studies, University of Maryland, College Park

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**Fashionable, Functional, and Frugal:  
Modernist Design in Everyday Objects,  
1930–1946**

Lecture and exhibit explore the infusion of modernist design into everyday life through appliances, furniture, tableware, and textiles, and place them in historical context.

November 19 7:30 PM      Location: Lecture at Greenbelt Municipal Building, Greenbelt

Begins  
November 20      Location: Exhibit at Greenbelt Community Center, Greenbelt  
Contact: *Katie Scott-Childress, 301-507-6582*  
Sponsor: Friends of the Greenbelt Museum

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**Windows on Music**

Pre-concert lectures by music historian Rachel Franklin introduce audiences to the historical and cultural context of music performed by the Annapolis Symphony Orchestra.

November 20 7:00 PM      Location: Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts, Annapolis

January 22 7:00 PM      Location: Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts, Annapolis  
Contact: *Pamela Chaconas, 410-269-1132*  
Sponsor: Annapolis Symphony Orchestra Association

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**Howard County Poetry and Literature Society—Project '99—Our 25th Program Year**

Internationally known poets and authors speak to both high school students and the public and are interviewed for cable television, including a two-day residency by Amiri Baraka, a group reading of Israeli poems of war and peace, and workshops by "Bill's Buddies" from the Folger Shakespeare Library.

November 22 3:00 PM      Location: Group reading by six Maryland poets, moderated by Moshe Dor at The Meeting House, Oakland Mills, Columbia

November 23 1:00 PM      Location: Interview of Moshe Dor and Barbara Goldberg by Roland Flint at Howard Community College Television Studio, Columbia

Contact: *Ellen Conroy Kennedy, 410-730-7524*

Sponsor: Howard County Poetry and Literature Society

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**Public Archaeology at the Cray House (c. 1809), Stevensville, Queen Anne's County, Maryland**

Archaeological excavations in Queen Anne's County study the construction and history of the Cray House, which will be summarized in a lecture to the public.

Fall 1998      Location: Supervised excavations by the public at the Cray House, Stevensville

January 15, 1999      Location: Lecture at the Queen Anne's County Free Library, Kent Island Branch (Stevensville)  
Contact: *John Seidel, 410-788-7756*  
Sponsor: Washington College

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## Programs Coming Soon

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### **The Storm is Passing Over**

Traveling exhibit tells the story of Maryland's African-American musicians and their music during the century following Emancipation. An online exhibition will be available through the Peabody Institute's and Maryland State Archives's websites.

Contact: Elizabeth Schaaf, 410-659-8257

Sponsor: Peabody Institute of The Johns Hopkins University

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### **Illegal Drugs in America: A History**

Documentary traces the history of illegal drugs in America from the late nineteenth century to the mid-1980s. The film will explore how various drugs first came into use in our society, who has been most harmed by drug use, and how drug laws have evolved over time.

Location: Baltimore

Contact: Jill Jonnes, 410-243-5417

Sponsor: Association of Maryland Area Media Artists, Inc.

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### **Magnificent Shoulders: The First All African-American Medical School Faculty**

Documentary chronicles the formation of the first African-American medical school faculty at Howard University during the 1930s and examines the impact that early twentieth century medical reforms had on the health care of blacks.

Contact: Carol Slocum, 301-434-6371

Sponsor: Sisters Empowered to Promote Interest and Opportunities in the Arts

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### **Cry Out! A Portrait of Hildegard of Bingen**

Documentary explores the life of Hildegard von Bingen (1098–1179)—composer, dramatist, theologian, and physician—who is considered today one of the great geniuses of the Middle Ages.

Location: Editing and post-production in the United States and Europe

Contact: Jo Francis, 301-422-8176

Sponsor: Flare Productions, Inc.

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### **Crab Picking on Maryland's Eastern Shore**

Illustrated booklet documents Eastern Shore crab picking industry, with special focus on women workers, based on oral history interviews with sixty crab pickers. It will be available on the museum's webpage.

Location: Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, St. Michael's

Contact: Melissa McLoud, 410-745-2916

Sponsor: Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum

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### **Movies of Color: Black Southern Cinema**

Documentary examines independent African-American filmmaking in the South between World War I and World War II, highlighting the contributions of filmmaker Keifer Jackson and producer Ker-Mar of Baltimore.

Location: Maryland, Texas, Florida, Indiana, Louisiana

Contact: Tom Thurman, 606-258-7277

Sponsor: North Carolina Film Foundation

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# Maryland's Best Kept Humanities Secrets

## The Greenbelt Museum

### The Greenbelt Museum

15 Crescent Road  
Greenbelt, Maryland 20770  
301-507-6582  
Curator: Katie Scott-Childress

Museum House at 10B Crescent Road:  
Open Sundays, 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM

Interpretive Exhibits at Greenbelt Community Center,  
15 Crescent Road: Open Daily 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM

Admission: Free

Greenbelt is a federally built, National Historic Landmark planned community. It was constructed during the 1930s as part of the New Deal's "greentowns" program. The Greenbelt Museum educates the public about Greenbelt's cultural heritage through collection, preservation, interpretation, and exhibition of works of art, the built environment, artifacts, and documents relating to the history of the community and its residents.

The Museum House is an original International Style house near the town's center that is restored and furnished with objects from the period of 1936 to 1946. The furniture on display was designed and built to fit these homes by the New Deal's Special Skills Division. The home also includes objects associated with the everyday life of a middle-class family during these years such as Fiesta ware and depression glass dishware, kitchen utensils, children's toys, clothes, and linens. The



walls are hung with original architectural renderings and artworks of Greenbelt created by New Deal artists and architects. Tours of the house provide visitors with a view of homelife for ordinary Americans of modest means during the Great Depression and World War II.

The Interpretive Exhibits are housed in the Art Deco-style Community Center. The Center's outer wall features dramatic friezes depicting the preamble to the Constitution created by New Deal sculptress Lenore Thomas Strauss. Exhibits explore topics such as the domestic arts and Greenbelt's architecture.

Beginning November 20, a new interpretive exhibit, "Fashionable, Functional, and Frugal: Modernist Design in Everyday Objects, 1930-1946," will be on display in the Community Center. This exhibit explores the infusion of modernist design into homes in Greenbelt via kitchen utensils, appliances, furniture, tableware, flatware, and textiles. Smithsonian Fellow Shelley Nickles will give an opening lecture entitled "From Manhattan to Main Street: Bringing Modernism Home" on Thursday, November 19, 1998 at 7:30 PM in the Greenbelt Municipal Building. The lecture and exhibit are free and open to the public. This new exhibit has been funded by the Maryland Historical Trust, the Maryland Humanities Council, and the Friends of the Greenbelt Museum.





# Maryland Revisited

In the many unplanned communities throughout Maryland, the local store often served as the center of the community. Whether it was a general store at a rural crossroads or a corner grocery store at a busy city intersection, it provided a congenial place for gatherings of neighbors. These relics from a bygone era were a stage for a variety of social functions. The latest news was excitedly discussed on its creaky porch or well-worn stoop. . . . Old men played checkers and swapped stories around its warming stove on frigid winter days. . . . Political debates among customers brought more heat than light to brisk fall election seasons. . . . Under its pressed tin ceiling or rough hewn rafters, respectable folk conversed in hushed tones when exchanging gossip about the latest neighborhood scandal. . . . Weather—both good and bad—was a constant topic of conversation as the business of buying and selling continued. . . . Within its warm, damp springtime confines, young men and women performed the awkward *pas de deux* which marked the beginnings of romance. . . . And boys and girls thought it a wondrous storehouse of treasure and, of course, candy.



*Buckel's General Store, in Bittinger, Garrett County, from Maryland Vanishing Lives by John Sherwood with photographs by Edwin H. Remsburg. Courtesy of Edwin H. Remsburg.*



*The Sherwood General Store in Riderwood, Baltimore County, c1910. Courtesy of the Maryland Historical Society.*



*Vincent Garofolo's store at 1007 East Lombard Street in Baltimore, 1926. Courtesy of the Maryland Historical Society.*



# An Interview with Belva J. Scott

By Barbara Wells Sarudy



*Belva J. Scott is the Program Officer in charge of the Family Matters and Reading/Discussion programs. She joined the Council in 1997 and was previously a Resource Teacher in the Baltimore County schools. She holds a Master of Liberal Arts degree from the Johns Hopkins University, and a BA in English from Morgan State University. Belva is also a playwright and for the last thirteen years has run the nonprofit Community Arts Project, which operates the Encore Theater in Baltimore.*

*What is your earliest memory of being intrigued by some subject in the humanities?*

I was intrigued by literature at a very early age. My mother read to me at bedtime and I looked forward to the nightly stories. My love for literature began then, and I still love a good story.

*Does learning about how people lived in the past help living in today's world?*

Learning about how people lived in the past is a key element in helping to live in today's world. Because we do not live in a world alone, it is important to understand where we fit into the total scheme of things and how we got to this time and place. As an African American, learning about the struggles and accomplishments of my people has been inspiring. Any problems of today pale in comparison to what my ancestors had to face.

*What about your work in the humanities makes you the happiest?*

What makes me happiest is contributing to a person's discovery. It's extremely fulfilling to see that "light bulb" go on over someone's head (yes, I've actually seen it); or to see that smile of awareness sweep over someone's face.

*Who or what inspired you to become involved in the humanities?*

My mother instilled in me a love of books, and I know that led to my desire to write. In college, my humanities professor was Dr. Ruthe T. Sheffey, and she was an awe-inspiring experience. She made me love the humanities (at least the subjects she taught).

*Do the humanities make us more understanding human beings?*

The humanities *can* make us more understanding human beings. Of course, we know that doesn't always happen. All the humanities in the world will not influence a closed mind.

*What is the most boring part of your job in the humanities?*

The most boring, but necessary, part of my job is the paperwork. Paperwork can kill an idea.

# OH BOY, FALL IS HERE!!!

It's time to...

Put away the lawn mower,  
Rake the yard,  
Stack the firewood,  
Find the mittens,  
Cook a big, juicy holiday bird,  
AND get out your checkbook

because our annual fundraising letter is in your mail box.

We eagerly await your reply, so we can keep all of the great programs you just read about in our magazine afloat for the coming months. We are truly thankful each year at this time to know that you support our efforts.



Maryland

## HUMANITIES

**Maryland Humanities Council**

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